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From Insulation to Bi-Culture and Globalization: A Case Study of Chinese Immigrants in Houston

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From Insulation to Bi-Culture and Globalization: A Case Study of Chinese Immigrants in Houston

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Abstract

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The aim of this case study is to investigate the relation between mass media consumption habits of Chinese immigrants in Houston and their acculturation in different generations. The author found new technologies was eroding the role of Chinese immigrant newspapers in Houston. With the development of the Internet, those young Chinese immigrants had more chances to enjoy their bicultural pleasure and became more globalized. Though, like the old generation of Chinese immigrants, they still relied on the enclave community to get the economy protection, they consumed more English media and were easier to acculturate into American society.

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Chapter One: Introduction

This exploratory research set out to study the relation between mass media consumption habits of Chinese immigrants and their acculturation in different generations. Mass media play a crucial role affecting immigrants' acculturation processes and formation of identities. Immigrant media at least have two functions. By consuming those media contents, immigrants not only maintain their ties with traditional culture and values from original countries but also are familiar with the host society. In this thesis, Chinese immigrants living in Houston will be selected as the subjects. The author will use both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate their media consumption habits and discuss how they acculturate to the host society and construct their identities.

Migration and media study, both richly interdisciplinary fields of study, overlap in various ways. According to Nancy Wood and Russell King (2001, 1-2), they suggested that there are at least three types of linkage or interrelationship between media and migration. The first type is about the media contents transmitted from the destination countries. The second type is how host-country media construct the migrants' images. Finally, they focused on media originating from the migration sending country. The discussion of the thesis will be based on the third interrelationship and illustrate the complex process of acculturations and the construction of the identity.

But there is one mystery which should be clarified. Some previous studies deemed the Chinese immigration community as one homogenous group and ignored its diversity (Lin 1998; Wong 1998; Zhou 1992). Though this thesis focus on the process of acculturation among different generations, it does not mean that this thesis will ignore the difference of subgroups among the Chinese immigrant community. Otherwise, this thesis strongly agrees with the notion

that Chinese immigrant media present various political stances and cultural identities for different subgroups with various backgrounds. In this thesis, the diversity was viewed as the key factor affecting how Chinese immigrants consume media. All research questions in this thesis are related to Chinese immigrants' diversity.

This research is a case study to explore how Chinese immigrants in Houston use Chinese media and construct their identities. There are several reasons for this thesis to study the Chinese immigrants in Houston. First, Chinese immigrants are one of the oldest and biggest immigrant groups in the United States, but, in contrast to other ethnic groups such as Latino immigrants, studies over Chinese immigrant media are still rare (Lin 1998; Zhou 2009).

Second, even though we could find some previous studies over Chinese immigrant media, most of them focused on the Chinese immigrants in New York or California (Lum 1991; Yu 2005; Zhou 2002). There is no literature studying the Chinese immigrants living in Houston. According to the report of U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000 there were 26541 Chinese Americans residing in Houston, where the biggest Chinese community located in the southern part of America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Unlike the traditional Chinatown in New York or California, the Chinese ethnosurb in Houston was developed after 1990s. Majority of its Chinese population are middle-class and well-educated. Most popular language here is Mandarin not Cantonese. Because of the sociodemographic difference between the new Chinese ethnoburb and the old Chinatown, previous studies on Chinese immigrant media are unable to provide satisfactory explanations.

Third, with the pace of technologies, most of previous studies on Chinese immigrant media conducted before 2000 did not discuss the new media issues including the Internet and cable TV (Hwang and He 1999; Lum 1991; Zhou 2002). Topics of those studies all about the

Chinese immigrant press. Understanding the tremendous impacts brought by the newly emerging technologies drove the author to expand the research scope. Instead of only focusing on the Chinese immigrant press, one of the aims in this thesis is to investigate how Chinese immigrants use those new media.

Historical Context of Chinese Immigration

The first Chinese immigrated to the United States in the late 1840s, making Chinese Americans the oldest ethnic group of Asian ancestry in the United States. News of gold found in the Sacramento River encouraged Chinese immigrants to rush to San Francisco, California. After World War II, legal barriers to Chinese immigration were lifted, and in 1965, with the passing of immigration legislation, the number of Chinese immigrants increased dramatically (Zhou, Min & Guoxuan, Cai 2002, 419). The change in immigration policies opened the door for new Chinese immigrants. According to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, between 1961 and 1990, 792,529 immigrants were admitted as permanent residents to the United States from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Between 1991 and 1998, 672,588 additional Chinese individuals became permanent residents of the United States (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 2000).

According to the report of the US Census Bureau in 2000, over 2.7 million Americans are of Chinese origin. There are also 1.3 million non-citizen Chinese who are viewed as immigrants, refugees, and people visiting on temporary visas. If we include 'underground' immigrants, the population of the Chinese diaspora in the United States reaches even higher numbers. This influx of Chinese people from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan has resulted in a Chinese-American community served by a Chinese immigrant press, which began with the founding of the Gold Hills' News in 1854 (Miller 1987, 27-28)

The development of the Chinese press could date back to before 1900 (Miller 1987, 27). There are some previous studies that help us to understand its historical context (Hwang and He 1999; Lum 1991; Miller 1987; Zhou 2002). However, new technologies change so rapidly that we cannot ignore their impacts on the Chinese immigrant press, particularly in the last ten years. This thesis will discuss the Chinese immigrant media from a different perspective and use previous research as a solid basis for further studies. The aim will be to answer certain questions, such as what is the general picture of Chinese immigrant media consumption habits or what is the difference in Chinese immigrants' media consumption habits between different generations. The author will observe Chinese immigrant families to ascertain how they use immigrant media including newspapers, TV and the Internet.

Intra-Group Diversity of Chinese Immigrants

Before discussing Chinese immigrant media, we must contest an ingrained impression that Chinese immigrants are a homogenous ethnic group. Whether the perspective of socioeconomic or ethnic background, Chinese immigrants are very diverse. Before the Second World War, Chinese immigrant populations were made up mostly of illiterate or semi-literate laborers from rural villages in China (Lai 1988; Zhou 1992). During this period, the Chinese immigrant community was an isolated society composed of unmarried men. Those Chinese sojourners left their families in China and came to America with the dream of making a fortune. Because of the limits of their education and language skills, they only worked at jobs that few Americans wanted. Their aim was to return home after making enough money; thus, they were called sojourners. In fact, according to the law, they were not even allowed to become naturalized.

After the Hart-Celler Act of 1965, new Chinese immigrants made qualitative and quantitative changes in the Chinese American population. Rather than coming solely from the southern province of China, contemporary Chinese immigrants today are from various parts of China and the great Chinese diaspora, including Taiwan, Hong Kong and some parts of Southeast Asia. Their socioeconomic backgrounds are more diverse than those of former bachelor Chinese immigrants. Some immigrants arrive in the United States with little money and low educational backgrounds and are forced to take low-wage jobs (Lu 2001, 205). Others come with savings, education and job skill levels higher than those of the average American. Linguistically, they come from various dialect groups, including Mandarin, Fujianese, Cantonese, Hakka and Shanghainese, dialects that are not mutually intelligible. Those differences mirror the media consumption habits or political stances of these individuals.

Here, another question emerges. How do we define the immigrants from Taiwan? Some people, most supporting the right-wing party in Taiwan, prefer to use the term "Taiwanese" rather than "Chinese" and stress the distinctive features of the two different communities. However, according to the report by the US Census Bureau in 2000, only around 110,000 Americans define themselves as Taiwanese Americans rather than Chinese Americans. Most immigrants from Taiwan still identity themselves as Chinese, or at least we can infer that even if they view themselves as Taiwanese, they will not deny that they are Chinese as well. In contrast to the term Taiwanese, "Chinese" is a more comprehensive term. Though this thesis will spend some pages discussing the diversity of Chinese immigrants and still uses the term "Taiwanese" to refer to immigrants from Taiwan, it views them as one sub-group of Chinese immigrants, rather than as a distinctively different ethnic group.

New waves of Chinese immigrants in past decades renewed the old Chinatown and established new Chinese ethnoburbs, new immigrant communities with strong ethnic enclave economies in middle-class suburbs (Li 1997). For example, these new immigrants established "second Chinatowns" more affluent urban neighborhoods such as Monterey Park in Los Angeles or Flushing in New York (Fong 1994; Zhou and Kim 2002). These new settlements are different from Old Cantonese-dominant Chinatowns and have had far-reaching impacts on the development of the Chinese immigrant press.

The social and economical background of the new immigrants is distinctly different from that of old Chinese immigrants. According to the 2004 American Community Survey, 50 percent of adult Chinese Americans have college degrees. Immigrants from Taiwan display the highest levels of education. Two-thirds of them have completed four years of college. Around 50 percent of the immigrants from Hong Kong and one-third of the immigrants from mainland China have college degrees. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the annual median household income for Chinese Americans was $ 57,000, compared with $ 49,000 for non-Hispanic whites.

Though new affluent immigrants with higher education and better job skills continue to be concentrated in the West or urban areas, they have had a pattern of settlement in the United States that is distinctly different from that of the old Chinese immigrants. These new immigrant professionals prefer to reside in integrated urban areas instead of ethnic enclaves. (Kwong and Miscevuc 2005,337). They settle in the outskirts of metropolitan areas once they arrive in the United States. For example, Flushing was originally a white middle-class area. A growing number of immigrants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China changed the demographics of Flushing and made it one of the fastest-growing neighborhoods in New York City. Their socioeconomic backgrounds are different from those of Chinese immigrants in

downtown New York City. “ thirty six percent of Flushing’s Chinese Americans are professionals in the field of accounting or computer science, compared to only 14 percent in Manhattan’s Chinatown: 38 percent have a degree above the college level, compared to 7 percent in Chinatown” (Kwong and Miscevuc, 2005, 337).

The majority of the population in Flushing consist of immigrants from Taiwan. The language used in Flushing is Mandarin, not Cantonese. Taiwanese-style cafés and teahouses serve bubble tea with tapioca beans, CDs or DVDs offer the latest Taiwan music, and Taiwanese TV soap operas are available in bookstores in Flushing. Because of the strong Taiwanese flavor of the community, some Taiwan media, including TV, radio stations, and newspapers, have set up their North American bureaus here. *World Journal*, the largest Chinese newspaper in the United States, also established its headquarters and printing plant in Flushing.

The rush to the suburbs since the 1980s has produced an unexpected challenge to the paradigm of the classic American pattern of movement from ethnic enclaves to the suburbs that is traditionally seen as characteristic of melting pot social mobility (Kwong and Miscevuc 2005, 341). In fact, the new Chinese suburbanites resist assimilation and create a reverse re-segregation process. These middle-class immigrants demand high living standards and are not interested in the old Chinatown, but they still favor three main cities and their surrounding areas: San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York (Kwong and Miscevuc 2005, 342).

The flow of international capital makes these “ethnoburbs” vibrant business centers. Businessmen understand the demand of those well-educated new immigrants and have established Chinese-owned Asian shopping plazas and supermarkets. To suit Chinese tastes, malls and supermarkets import goods from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China. In addition, Chinese immigrants can find hair salons, skin care centers, and bookstores selling Chinese periodicals in

such malls. Any ethnic consumer good or service that these individuals enjoyed in their original countries can be found in an ethnoburb. The existence of these businesses creates a comfort zone for Chinese immigrants and makes them feel as though they still live in Taiwan or Hong Kong. Many believe that within such communities, many believe it does not matter if the immigrants can speak English (Zhou & Guoxuan 2002).

The Chinese Immigrant Press

With limited English proficiency and the desire for information from their old homeland, the new surge of Chinese immigrants created an enormous demand for Chinese immigrant media(Kwong and Miscevuc 2005, 342). In contrast to the mainstream media, the Chinese immigrant media is a complex and changing system. Demographic and market factors guide the development of Chinese immigrant media in the United States. Take the Chinese-language press, for example. Chinese Americans, one of the fastest growing ethnic groups, are divided principally into three sub-groups: immigrants from China, Hong Kong (once again part of China after the 1997 handover), and Taiwan. Most Chinese people use one written language (with traditional or simplified characters), but they do not share one spoken language. In addition to Mandarin (the official language of mainland China and Taiwan), there are various local dialects such as Min, Hakka, Chaozhounes, Cantonese and so forth. Generally speaking, just as Chinese immigrants are divided into three regions (China, Hong Kong and Taiwan), there are three national daily newspapers: *The World Journal*, *Sing Tao Daily*, and the *China Press*. These papers publish news and information of interest to people who are immigrants of the areas in question. The contents of the three newspapers also differ in their ideologies and political stances. Those differences reflect the diverse need of a set of co-ethnic clientele. “Chinese-language print media, which include dailies, weeklies and magazines, are already extremely diverse in term of

content, audience, ideological lookout and cultural affinity (Wanning Sun 2006, 2). One of the research questions in this thesis will discuss this issue.

This diversity is based not only on countries of origin but also on class. For example, like the *Sing Tao Daily*, the *Ming Pao Daily News* is also a Hong Kong-based newspaper. The readers of both newspapers are from Hong Kong. However, the targeted readers of the *Ming Pao Daily News* are young immigrants with a stronger educational background. The New York edition entered the U.S. market in 1997, and the San Francisco edition launched in 2004. According to Zhou, the *Ming Pao Daily News* has a current U.S. readership around 100,000 (Zhou 2005, 131).

The Chinese immigrant media know the diversity within the Chinese immigrant community and where the targeted readers are. For example, in the context of the influx of immigrants from China, *the World Journal*, the pro-Taiwan newspaper, wanted to expand its market share in the United States. The paper has therefore made some adjustments to its contents and hired more immigrants from China as journalists (Zhou & Guoxuan 2002, 419).

The World Journal, the *Sing Tao Daily*, and the *China Press* are the "big three" Chinese-language newspapers in the United States. In addition to these three nationally distributed newspapers, there are numerous Chinese-language community newspapers owned by new immigrants in various cities across the United States. In general, these local newspapers are all available for free in every Chinese supermarket. Unlike the ownership of the "big three," papers that have sufficient financial support, the ownership of the smaller newspapers changes quickly. It is hard to estimate the exact number of these newspapers and their circulation or readership. Because the local newspapers are free for their readers, advertisements become the main financial source. Some Chinese immigrants, particularly those who cannot speak English,

claimed the advertisements are more important than the newspapers' contents. The advertisements provide immigrants with viable information on subjects including jobs, housing, taxation and immigration/legal services (Zhou 2002). In addition, local ethnic businesses also rely on these newspapers as important promotion channels.

Among the small local newspapers, the *Southern Chinese Daily*, the biggest local Chinese-language newspaper in Houston, represents a very successful case. It was founded in 1979 by an immigrant from Taiwan. Reflecting the business model of the community Chinese newspaper, it is a family-run business, and its daily circulation is 25,000. Nowadays, it is the biggest local newspaper and an affiliate of the Southern Chinese Newspaper Group (SCNG), a Chinese-language newspaper network including the Bay Area, Seattle, Boston, Washington DC, Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta and Dallas. Though the *Southern Chinese Daily* claims that it is a nationwide Chinese newspaper, Houston is still its main market. It is free and available in every Chinese supermarket in Houston. The paper offers domestic and local news as well as international news about Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, and Southeast Asia and sports news, financial news, various supplements, film and theater columns and economic news.

In Houston, there are various local Chinese newspapers available in every Chinese supermarket for free. However, because of the rapid media market fluctuation and shortage of financial support, it is not easy for such small newspapers to survive for a long time (Zhou 2009). Nowadays, the *Southern Chinese Daily* is the main and the oldest Chinese community newspaper in Houston. In addition, of the "big three" nationwide newspapers, *The World Journal*, the *Sing Tao Daily* and *The China Press*, only *The World Journal* has distribution and an editorial branch in Houston. Unlike free Chinese-language newspapers, one copy of *The World Journal* costs $1.25. It is available in Chinese supermarkets. In summary, the Chinese-

language newspaper market in Houston is dominated by *The World Journal* and the *Southern Chinese Daily*. The former is a nationwide newspaper, whereas the latter is a local free newspaper that has relied on ads from local business in Chinatown. Both are pro-Taiwan newspapers.

Since the founding of the Golden Hill News in 1854, the Chinese immigrant press has been divided along different political lines. Before the beginning of the 20th century, the debate was between the pro-reform movement that desired to reform the Manchu government and the revolutionary party that desired to overturn the Manchu government (Wang, 1968). After the communists took power in China in 1949, the battle lines were drawn between the pro-Taiwan campaign and the pro-China campaign. The aim of the Chinese press in the United States was to gain political support from Chinese individuals overseas (Zhou 2009, 125).

The partisan tendency of the Chinese immigrant press is a reflection of the sojourner mentality among certain Chinese immigrants (Zhou 2009, 139). Most members of the older generations believed that they would go back to China and end their journeys once they had earned enough money. However, this does not mean that Chinese newspapers in the United States do not also function to help Chinese immigrants adapt to the host society (Zhou 2002, 437). In addition to covering their readers' countries of origin, the Chinese newspapers also cover local community affairs. According to Lee (1987), although the Chinese newspapers have historically featured two different political ideologies, pro-Taiwan and pro-China, the newspapers have served as a bridge between the Chinese immigrants and the host society. For those Chinese immigrants who cannot speak English, the Chinese newspapers are their main source for understanding mainstream society.

Chinese Television

Since the mid-1980s Chinese-Language television has developed rapidly (Sun, 2006). Before the mainstream US corporations entered the Chinese media market, there were three major Chinese-language television networks in the United States: Asian American Television (AATV), the Chinese Television Network (CTN) and North American Television (NATV). AATV is based in Los Angeles and provides programming such as new Chinese movies from China. It also produces local programming about topics related to mainstream U.S. society and the Chinese American community. CTN, established in Honk Kong in 1994, serves the Chinese community globally. Copying its business model from CNN, it claimed at one point to be the largest Chinese television network in the world and provided 24-hourly programming in both Cantonese and Mandarin. After 2000, CTN moved its headquarters to Taipei and only provided Mandarin programming. According to Min Zhou, in the 1990s, the major US market for CTN was Los Angeles, and it had a viewership of around 280,000 households via local cable channels and 285,000 via satellite dishes (Zhou 2009, 134). NATV was established in 1994 in Los Angeles. It provides Cantonese programming from Hong Kong and Mandarin programming from Taiwan. The viewership of NATV is around 860,000 nationwide (Zhou and Cai, 2006)

Additionally, the mainstream American companies have also entered the Chinese-language television market. Direct TV and the Dish Network both provide different packages for Chinese viewers. For example, the Great Wall TV pages, provided by the Dish Network, bundle 17 popular Chinese-language news and entertainment channels from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. These two American corporations offer 24-hourly TV programming for Chinese immigrants and deliver the latest news, movies, and shows from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Chinese immigrants from different areas can select news or other programs from their

"homeland" and get the information that they want instantly. Like the Chinese press, the selection of Chinese television channels also reflects the diversity of Chinese immigrants.

Enclave Economy

According to Zhou (2009), the "enclave economy" is the foundation of the Chinese immigrant media. An enclave economy is a special business model in Chinatown. This model depends on co-ethnic labor and family investment (Zhou 2009, 145). For example, family-run Chinese restaurants are typical businesses based on enclave economies. Enclave economies provide some advantages for both the business owners and the workers. Business owners can obtain reliable labor from new immigrants who encounter language barriers in the host country (Fong and Luk 2007, 12). Based on ethnic identities, small business owners can establish personal connections with both consumers and material suppliers. At the same time, the disadvantaged who are isolated by the large labor market can be protected by the enclave economy and feel as comfortable as if they still lived in their countries of origin (Lee 1994).

One of the debatable issues related to the enclave economy is the exploitation of labor. An enclave economy relies heavily on cheap labor. The aim of the owner is to lower costs and product prices. Employers see themselves as "victims of competition from American businesses as well as from fellow Chinese. From their point of view, they are fighting for survival; therefore, they have cut costs to the minimum" (Kwong 1987, 63). For this reason, the enclave economy only benefits some low-skilled industries and limits the development and scope of businesses.

In addition, the enclave economy also hinders the social mobility of the immigrants involved. Previous studies have suggested that "working in the ethnic economy hampers participation in the social activities of the wider society." (Fong and Ooka, 2002, 142)

However, an interesting phenomenon has been observed along with increased globalization. Those new immigrants with higher educational backgrounds encounter more opportunities beyond the traditional enclave economy (Fong and Luk 2007, 14). Instead of merely reacting to structural disadvantages in their host countries, they use their bicultural skills and personal networks, bridging their original countries and their host countries to create market niches (Lum, 1991). Compared to that of traditional Chinatowns, the new ethnic enclave economy is much more specific and globalized. Because of connections with the immigrants' original countries, the new enclave economy becomes a part of the global economy. Instead of emphasizing small family businesses such as restaurants and laundry stores, the new enclave economy expands to the financial and electronics industry with an abundant support of capital and professional labor (Fong and Luk 2007, 13).

Because of the increase in the scale and variety of ethnic businesses in Chinatowns and Chinese ethnoburbs, the concept of the enclave economy impresses many scholars. The enclave economy depends almost entirely on ethnic capital, labor, and consumer markets and serves as an anchor or identity marker for the immigrant community (Zhou 1992). The survival and growth of the enclave economy depend heavily on ethnic resources such as foreign capital, pooled family savings, the ethnic labor force, ethnic consumers, and transnational markets. With the increase in ethnic consumer markets, ethnic businesses must find a new way to communicate with their potential consumers. Chinese immigrant media provide ethnic businesses with marketing and advertisements. Ultimately, Chinese immigrant media themselves become a new type of ethnic business.

However, this enclave economy model limits the development of Chinese ethnic newspapers. The motivation driving Chinese immigrants to read Chinese immigrant newspapers

is the presence of stories from their country of origin. Without extra financial support, it is hard for local Chinese immigrant newspapers based in enclave economies to cover these stories. Under the conditions of media globalization and concentration, according to Lin and Song (2006), only multinational enterprises can afford to publish dailies, circulate a few hundred thousand copies, and therefore achieve a prominent position in Chinese immigrants' cultural lives. For example, *the World Journal*, the transnational news group within "enclave economy", is very successful in America. On the one hand, it takes advantage of resources provided by its mother company to publish stories about China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. On the other hand, it makes a profit from Chinese immigrants and ads by local companies within immigrant communities.

Immigration and settling down in a host society can be one of the most dynamic and complex processes in an individual's life. Personal and cultural changes are enmeshed in continuous processes of discovery, upheaval and crisis. Along the way, immigrants attempt to maintain their original identity in the context of a culturally bifurcated life (Lu 2001). For example, in the United States, immigrants find themselves in paradoxical situations: they have voluntarily left their old homeland but remain emotionally attached to it; they aspire to become a part of their new homeland but are often blocked by language and cultural barriers. They need institutional support such as immigrant media, to help ease adjustment difficulties (Zhou 2002).

Immigrant media serve a double role for immigrants. On the one hand, they provide a means of learning about the host society and ways to adapt to it (Hwang and He, 1999; Viswanath and Arora, 2000; Walker, 1999). On the other hand, they also preserve immigrants' cultural heritage and strengthen their sense of intra-group solidarity (Lee and Tse, 1994; Lum, 1991; Zilberg and Leshem, 1996). According to Min Zhou, Chinese language media has dual

functions as well. It not only connects immigrants to their original countries but also promotes the assimilation of immigrants into the host society. “Chinese language media also serve as an important ethnic social institution that is complementary rather than inharmonious to the host society” (Zhou, Min & Guoxuan, Cai 2002, 419). As an ethnic social institution, the Chinese immigrant media plays important roles in helping Chinese immigrants to merge into America society. It seems that no one would deny the function of the Chinese immigrant media. However, there is no research on Chinese immigrants’ media consumptions and how they assimilate into American society.

The focus of this case study is to understand how the Chinese media satisfies a diverse set of Chinese communities in Houston. Is there any conflict over “the imagined community”, the concept proposed by Anderson (1983)? Does the Chinese press include its entire audience and reflect that diversity in its content? Or, alternatively, does it just focus on segregated markets and create content for a particular audience?

Structure of the thesis

The body of this thesis is divided into five chapters: the introduction, literature review, methodology section, interpretation section and conclusion. In the introduction, the thesis illustrates the context for Chinese immigrant media. Previous qualitative studies of mass communication will be the basis of this chapter. The topics in this chapter include the history of Chinese immigration, the development of Chinese immigrant media and enclave economies. The aim of this chapter is to build a solid fundament for the further discussion of Chinese immigrants’ media consumption habits.

In chapter two, this thesis will review previous studies on Chinese immigrant media. Based on the research questions, the literature review will also be divided into three different

parts. The first part will be about the history of the Chinese immigrant press and Chinese immigrants' media consumption. The second part will be about enclave economies and ethnoburbs. The final part will be about acculturation and identities.

In the chapter on methodology, the author will explain how the data for this thesis were collected and analyzed. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are adopted for this thesis. First, the author will survey one company near the Chinatown in Houston. The aim of this survey is to ascertain the general outline of Chinese immigrants' media habits and determine the subjects to observe and interview. During the second step, the author will observe how young Chinese immigrants watch Chinese-language TV and sing karaoke during their weekend parties, doing further investigation via interviews. Finally, the author will conduct in-depth interviews with several extended immigrant families to ascertain the differences among the generations.

Chapter four and five will detail the data interpretation. In addition to considering the Chinese immigrant press, these two chapters will explore new fields, including new media and TV, and determine the evolution of Chinese immigrants' media consumption habits. Previous studies of Chinese immigrants' media consumption focus on either New York (Lum, 1991) or the Bay Area (Hwang and He, 1999). The immigrants that this thesis will study live in Houston. In contrast to those living in New York and California, most Chinese immigrants in Houston settled there after the 1990s. The demographics of Chinese immigrants in Houston are different from those of Chinese immigrants in New York or the Bay area. Here, most Chinese immigrants are middle-class. In this chapter, this thesis will describe the contemporary Chinese immigrant media environment in Houston and answer the research questions using those three different methods.

Finally, Chapter six will conclude this thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Instead of using the term "immigrant media", some scholars have used the term "ethnic media", which are often regarded as media *by* and *for* ethnic individuals in a host country, providing content in ethnic languages (Hayes 2006; Jeffres 1999; Johnson 2000; Lum 1991; Ojo 2006; Park 1922 &1970; Renz 2006; Riggins, 1992a; Viswanath & Arora 2000). The assumption is that the content of the ethnic media is produced by the ethnic communities in the host countries. The aim of the ethnic media is to serve the ethnic groups in question, ministering to their political, economical and cultural needs. However, this notion neglects one key point: that some or most parts of the contents are provided by globalized networks from the original countries rather than by the media outlets of local ethnic communities in host countries. To stress the element of globalization, this thesis uses the term "immigrant media" rather than "ethnic media".

Lum (1991) explores how Chinese immigrants use media and the assimilation process for different generations in New York's Chinatown by observing and interviewing a Chinese immigrant family. He finds that Chinese media, such as *The World Journal* and the *Sing Tao Daily*, are indispensable information sources for first-generation Chinese immigrants in helping them to maintain their cultural identity; however, they also insulate them from mainstream society. He supports the concept of pluralism and suggests that insularity is not the same as segregation. "I am not suggesting Chinatown is a closed system. It is a product of transaction between two cultures; the cultural norms and practices of its residents have changed over decades of interaction with American society. The experiences of Chinese immigrants in the

United States are different from the experiences of the Chinese in Hong Kong, Taiwan or the People's Republic" (Lum, 1991, 98).

Focusing on middle-class Chinese immigrants in Silicon Valley, Hwang and He (1999) adopt the uses and gratifications approach to explore Chinese immigrants' media consumption patterns and acculturation. They interview over 20 Chinese immigrant families, and their findings show that *The World Journal* is the most important information source for the immigrant families in question. They conclude that the availability of Chinese-language media and sociodemographic variables hampers the impact of English media use on immigrant acculturation. Xing Lu (2001) took the ethnographic approach to interviewing 35 Chinese immigrants who have graduate degrees and speak Mandarin in Chicago. Her findings indicate that none of those interviewees viewed Chinatown as their community center. They believed that Chinatown was for early immigrants who could not speak English and had received little education—early immigrants who came from the southern parts of China and most of whom spoke Cantonese.

Diversity of Chinese Immigrants and Enclave Economy

The booming development of the immigrant media is the result of the influx of immigrants into the United States. There are at least two obvious outcomes of this addition for new Chinese immigrants. One is the intragroup diversity within the Chinese immigrant community. The other is the issue of media globalization. This paper views these two outcomes as contextually important. It is impossible to discuss Chinese immigrants' media consumption without considering them.

According to Min Zhou (2009), who outlines the landscape of the Chinese immigrant press based on differing ethnic origins, there exists a "big three" in the world of Chinese

newspapers: the *World Journal*,the *Sing Tao Daily* and the *China Press*. Different newspapers present particular cultural backgrounds or even political affiliations. The *World Journal*, the largest Chinese newspaper in America, is the branch of the United Daily group located in Taiwan. Its political stance is pro-Taiwan. The *Sing Tao Daily* is from Hong Kong. Immigrants whose mother tongue is Cantonese and who come from Hong Kong are its targeted readers. The *China Press* presents the perspective of immigrants from China. Its political stance is pro-China. The "big three" indicate the three different sub-groups of Chinese immigrants.

Globalization changes the meaning of the ethnic media. According to Appadurai (1990), there are five dimensions of global cultural flow that can be named: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes. In the complex trajectories of transnational flows of people, technology, capital, media images and ideologies, media and migration are two major and interconnected factors whose relationship with each other is the key to understanding the link between the global and the modern (Appadurai, 1990, 1996).

Because Chinese-language newspapers are based on transnational networks, the assumption that the ethnic media are produced by the ethnic community in the host society has changed. Lin and Song indicate that only transnational enterprises have the ability to publish dailies and circulate a few hundred thousand copies (Lin and Song, 2006).

The enclave economy is viewed as an alternative to mainstream society that forms a shelter for the disadvantaged (Zhou and Cai 2002, 424). Because of their isolation and external pressure, Chinatowns have become self-sufficient neighborhoods based on enclave economies. There are two essential features of enclave economies: proprietorship, co-ethnic employment, interaction with an ethnic market, spatial concentration and diversified enterprises(Zhou, 2003). Proprietorship refers to "the extent to which members of an ethnic group are self-employed"

(Zhou 1992, 100). Because of proprietorship and co-ethnic employment, reliable and cheap labor support local small business in lowering costs and help them to survive in a highly competitive business environment. Though the development of an enclave economy can trigger some arguments over exploitation, those businesses also provide more jobs for co-ethnic community members who cannot find jobs in the host society. Job searching within the enclave economy, for them, is about the choice between low wages and being jobless (Zhou, 1992). The new immigrants are confronted with a "double trap: the racially segmented American labor market and the harsh labor conditions of the Chinatown economy" (Zhou, 1997). Working within an enclave economy, one's opportunities to speak English and participate in the mainstream economy are blocked. The result is that enclave coworkers may actually embark on a path of downward mobility and be marginalized by the host society(Zhou 1992). In the enclave economy, the connection between customers and storeowners is based on ethnic identity rather than on economic factors. However, with the influx of new Chinese immigrants, the author is curious of the role of the enclave economy. Do these structures help Chinese immigrants become integrated into American society, or do new Chinese immigrants with professional backgrounds continue to rely on the enclave economy and remain isolated from the host society?

Debates about Assimilation

Traditionally, the process by which immigrants adapt to the host society can be divided into four steps: (1) assimilation, (2) integration, (3) integration, and (4) marginality (Berry, 1983). Martim and Nakayama (1997) identify four types of cultural adaptation: separation, assimilation, marginalization, and integration. From the perspective of the dominated group in a society, assimilation, meaning that immigrants have become part of "the great melting pot", is viewed as the highest ideal.

According to Min Zhou, there are three assumptions central to the classic view of assimilation. First, this is a natural process by which diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture and gain equal access to the opportunity structure of the host society. Secondly, this natural process entails the gradual abandonment of old-world cultural and behavioral patterns in favor of new ones. Thirdly, once this process is in motion, it moves inevitably toward assimilation (Zhou 2005, 6-5).

The classic view of assimilation suggests that ethnic cultures, native languages and ethnic enclaves hinder the process of assimilation, but that native-born generations adopt English as their primary language and then become more similar to individuals in the mainstream society, dominated by the majority group (Horton 1995). However, Herbert Gans (1992) finds that some immigrants groups do not converge into the mainstream in the way described by assimilation theories. Immigrant children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds have been seen to struggle more than middle-class children in schools. Gans (1992) describes this as the "second-generation decline" (173-192). Additionally, because of the transnational flow of human capital and monetary capital, the development of the enclave economy opens up the door for immigrants with professional skills, and they do not have to experience the painful process of emerging into t mainstream society (Gans 1992, 173-192). This finding cast doubt on the classic assimilation perspective.

Some scholars are not satisfied with the narrow meaning of assimilation and use the concept of acculturation instead. According to Milton Gordon (1964), there are three models of acculturation: Anglo conformity, the melting pot and cultural pluralism. Anglo conformity demands the complete renunciation of the immigrant's original culture and the acceptance of the Anglo-Saxon group's values or culture (Gordon 1964, 5). The melting pot model postulates that

immigrants will eventually give up their culture and blend into the American culture. Pluralism suggests that immigrants should preserve their culture within the context of American society (Gordon 1964, 10).

Unlike in the classic assimilation theories, Alejandro Portes (1996) proposed the idea of segmented assimilation, believing the host society is shaped by class and racial stratification. He believes that there are three different patterns of assimilation. The first is acculturation and economic integration into mainstream middle-class America (Portes 1996, 8). The second is the downward-mobility pattern of acculturation and integration into the margins of America society. The third is selective acculturation, with the preservation of the ethnic community's values, social ties and institutions. The segmented assimilation theory indicates that there are two sets of factors that determine the process of acculturation: the exit context and that of one's reception. The exit context includes pre-migration resources, social status in one's homeland, motivations and means of migration (Portes 1996, 11). The reception context includes racial stratification, government policies and labor market conditions.

At the turn of the last century, previous studies discussed the role of the press in socializing immigrants in the United States (Cooley, 1909; Dewey, 1916; Park, 1920, 1925). However, studies about how Chinese immigrants in the United States use media to adjust to the host society are still rare. According to Min Zhou , there are two different perspectives on how ethnic institutions affect immigrants' integration into the host society. The assimilationist believes that the ethnic community and the host society are mutually exclusive. As immigrants become assimilated to their new homeland, they will withdraw from ethnic institutions (Zhou 2009, 4). In contrast, the multicultural perspective assumes that ethnic institutions are part of the

host society. For immigrants, ethnic institutions such as immigrant media will help them to find an identifiable place in the host society.

Based on the segmented assimilation theory, Min Zhou supports the perspective of the multiculturalists. In interviewing 60 acupuncturists in Los Angeles, she found that without the ability to speak English well, Chinese immigrants could still describe the NBA playoff game vividly. She concluded that Chinese language media should be viewed as a social institution that is "complementary rather than oppositional in relation to the host society" (Zhou, 2009, 141).

Media and Identities

As Hall(1996) believes, identities are social constructions. Hall gives identities a definition: "Identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language, and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we represent ourselves" (Hall, 1996a, p. 4).

With constant transformations, identities are "multiply constructed across different, often antagonistic, discourses, practices, and positions" (Hall 1996a, 4). Diasporic identities are not only constantly producing or reproducing themselves with itineraries of migration but are also re-creating the desire to return to "lost origins" (Hall, 1994). Media play a constitutive rather than a reflexive role (Hall, 1996b). Instead of being natural givens, identities are constructed by the media as a discursive effect of storytelling. The media impose "an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation, which is the history of all diasporas" (Hall, 1994, p. 394). Hall is opposed to viewing identity as a fixed concept. Instead, identity should be viewed as fluid, multiple, and ever-changing. Kim (1996) indicates that some Asian immigrants develop bicultural identity through intercultural communication experiences. The key factors in

developing this identity are individual attributes such as motivation, education level and positive environment, including the host culture's level of acceptance.

In addition to dispersal and fragmentation, the media also create collective imaginations that highlight the shared aspects of individual identities in terms of common culture, geography, and history. Those imaginations bind discrete subjects into an "imagined community" (Anderson, 1983). The term "imagined communities" was coined by Anderson in his famous book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Anderson (1983) believes that initially newspapers and novels played a central role in creating and sustaining "an imagined community among a specific assemblage of fellow-readers" (Anderson 1983,62). Lowe (1996) indicates that novels are primary agents that "naturalize" immigrants into "citizens" or otherwise "discipline" them as "aliens" (p. 173). Simply speaking, nations are social constructs within the minds of the members of all large communities ''because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'' (Anderson 1983, 15).

Anderson's notion of imagined community reflects the readership of Chinese immigrant newspapers. "*The World Journal,* for example, evokes an imaginary geography with Taiwan as the primary place of belonging, whereas *Sing Tao Daily News* is unambiguously anchored in the place imaginary privileging Hong Kong". "Similarly, readers of the *Ming Pao Daily* can expect their fellow readers to be relatively younger, middle class and cosmopolitan Hong Kong migrants", and diasporic readers of the *China Daily* are most likely to be migrants from the PRC (Sun 2005).

To put it simply, for Anderson, print capitalism plays a crucial role in forming images of the community (Anderson, 1991). However, the related discussion is not limited to print media. In the era of globalization, new technologies are more powerful in their ability to maintain the connections between immigrant communities dispersed all over the world from their original countries. Because of new technologies and electronic media including the Internet, satellite TV and DVDs, cultural flows from peripheral countries to Western cultural centers are able to highlight topics related to identity formation and politics. For example, as Anderson does regarding the role of newspapers, Appadurail supports the notion that the mass media, particularly electronic media, have an impact on identity construction (Appadurail, 1996). The media provide resources for self-imagination that can engender translocal social and political action on a collective level (Appadurail,1996, 4).

Sun (2002) also agrees regarding the central role of the media in constructing collective identities. She believes that because of the unstoppable development of electronic media, including TV, Cable TV, DVDs and the Internet, those new media have had multiple impacts on Chinese identity. She notes that the Internet enables Chinese migrants to articulate a "strategically 'pure' collective subjectivity" (p. 133) that refers continually to the homeland to dilute the conditions of displacement, "cultural in-betweenness" (p. 195), "multiplicity," and "fragmentation" of identity that they experience in material reality (p. 133). In Appadurai's words, these deterritorialized global media and technologies bring with them the promise of a "postnational" or transnational Chinese imagination.

Chinese transnational movements are not a recent phenomenon (Chee, 2005; Ma, 2003). Scholars have long questioned the making of heterogeneous subjectivities in exploring "the Chinese Diaspora" (Ang, 2001; Lowe, 1991; Skeldon, 2003).Yu Shi interviewed six

Chinese immigrants living in Iowa City. Her findings present the heterogeneity of Chinese immigrant communities. One of her interviewees is from Hong Kong. Unlike other interviewees from China, this student from Hong Kong consciously resists the Chinese identity imposed by communist Mainland China. Because of her complicated migration experience and previous interactions with diverse diasportic communities, this interviewee claimed that she would never use the term "motherland" to describe China (Yu 2002). In Yu Shi's 2005 article, excerpts from this interviewee's commentary indicate the diversity of Chinese immigrant identity. "When asked to define the concept, she told a long story to demonstrate the complexity of constructing a definition of the group, and complained how inadequate the single English word 'Chinese' is to capture the differences among all people of Chinese origin" (Yu 2005, 69). This thesis will discuss the diverse identities among Chinese immigrants. The discussion is not only about intra-group diversity but also about the changing identities of different generations.

Research Questions

There are five research questions will be answered in this thesis. Those five questions can be grouped in three categories. The first category includes RQ 1 and RQ2. The second category includes RQ 3 and RQ4. The third category includes RQ5.

The first is about media consumption habits. This case study will outline the map of how those Chinese immigrants interviewed by the author use Chinese-language media. Most previous studies pay much attention to the discussion of the Chinese immigrant press. Though this thesis will continue those discussions and use those studies as its foundation, it will also explore the field of new media and see if the younger generation relies on the Chinese immigrant press as its information source. The use of the Internet will be discussed in this context. The thesis also takes into account the ethnic difference of the

Chinese immigrant community. The comparison of media consumption habits is made not only between different generations and decades but also between different original countries.

The second group of research questions is about the enclave economy, which is the context in which the interviewees are living. The author views Chinese-language media as a social institution within the enclave economy. In addition to discussing the role of Chinese-language media, this thesis will consider the function of the enclave economy in facilitating acculturation.

The final group of research questions is about the issue of identity. As in the discussion of media consumption habits, the author will compare the identities not only of different generations but also of individuals of different ethnic origins. Then, the author will see if a collective Chinese identity exists or if those particular middle-class immigrants have a unique identity. The questions are as follows:

1. **How do new media technologies change those Chinese immigrants' consumption habits?** This question will focus on the media consumptions habits of Chinese immigrants in Houston. Through this question, we can figure out the evolution of media consumption habits during the past two decades, and understand the future of the Chinese immigrant press.
2. **How does the intra-group diversity affect their media consumption habits?** Previous studies showed the market of the Chinese immigrant press reflects the diversity of Chinese immigrant community. For example, immigrants from Taiwan prefer to read the newspaper from Taiwan. The author wants to know if this

diversity affects their consumption habits on new media such as the Internet and cable TV.

3. **How do those Chinese immigrants rely on the "enclave economy"?** In this question, this thesis will illustrate the function of the "enclave economy" in terms of creating social mobility for immigrants. And then, the author wants to know how Chinese-language media serve immigrants during the acculturation process. Or, alternatively, do Chinese-language media hamper immigrant acculturation?
4. **How do these Chinese immigrants enjoy their bicultural pleasure and form their cultural hybridity?** In this question, the thesis will illustrate how those immigrants enjoy their unique culture, which is different from that in the host country and original country, within their enclave community.
5. **What are the different identities associated with the different generations?** Following the former questions, the author wants to know if a collective Chinese identity exists, and the evolution and formation of identities in different generations.

Chapter Three: Methods

How to collect the data is one of the difficulties of studying Chinese immigrant media consumption habits. Because of a lack of statistical data as necessary to define the population of Chinese immigrants, it is hard to do random sampling and conduct surveys based on quantitative methods, and most of previous studies have used qualitative approaches, including in-depth interviews and observation. To answer the research questions thoroughly, this thesis will build a multi-level construction that combines quantitative and qualitative methods to collect the data.

Before gathering the data, the thesis will use historical analysis to discuss the context of Chinese immigrant media. Previous studies are the main basis for this chapter. Marshall and Rossman (1989) simply state that historical analysis is "a method of discovering, from records and accounts, what happened in the past" (95). Instead of reporting facts and events that happened in the past, historical analysis must use "various levels of generalization to describe interpret or explain collection of data" (Nord, 1989, 291). To find the truth behind the data, the author must establish a link between the data and some wider context. Besides, unlike in the case of the Spanish immigrant media, literature about the Chinese immigrant media is comparatively rare. Understanding the historical context becomes the first step in the process for this thesis.

This thesis also involved three methods of data collection: surveys, observations and interviews. These methods consist of three steps. First, the author did a survey of a company located in Chinatown in Houston. Through this survey, the author mapped Chinese immigrants' media consumption habits and sorted out the participants to be observed and interviewed in the subsequent two stages. In stage two, the author attended those employees' weekend parties and observed how they relied on the Internet to watch TV and sing karaoke. Finally, the author

interviewed five Chinese immigrant families in Houston to identify generational differences in terms of media consumption habits and identities. The author aimed to outline the process of these immigrants' acculturation. The progression of the methods can be illustrated as follows:

Step 1: Survey in HTC === Step 2: Observation of employees from HTC=== Step 3: Interviews with five families

Though observation was viewed as the main method of the second step, at the end of the observation, the author also interviewed six of those participants. Similarly, in the third step, all the interviewing was conducted at the participants' homes, and the author observed how they used media. Therefore, although step two and three stressed different methods (observation and interview), both methods were adopted in each of these two steps.

According to Potter (1996), the concern of quantitative research in terms of sampling is how each element is selected randomly. The aim is to find the sample representing the population. However, the aim of qualitative research is "gaining access to relevant evidence" (Potter 1996, 104). To obtain the "relevant" data, the author conducted a survey to sort out the subjects to interview and observe.

The reason why the author selected the employees from HTC as the subjects is that HTC represents the new enclave economy in Houston. HTC, a smart phone company from Taiwan, is now not only a supplier for T-Mobile but also the manufacturer of the Google phone. In HTC's branch in Houston, there are 40 Chinese laborers employed. Previous studies on the enclave economy always focused on small and family-run businesses such as restaurants or laundries. Those businesses relied on ethnic relationships to hire employees and expand markets.

The enclave economy provides protection for those immigrants who have just arrived in America and are not familiar with the host society. This can be viewed as fundamental for the Chinese immigrant community.

With globalization, ethnic business economies that have been reshaped become more globalized and expand to include more advanced segments such as banking and financial services. Unlike in the old enclave economy, the new businesses cooperate with the local companies in the host society. They are deemed a bridge between the original country and the host country. The employees that they hire are not immigrants with low education levels but are instead professionals. They are not isolated from the host society as was previously the case. However, they still preserve some characteristics of the old enclave economy. The new companies still rely on ethnic relations and identities to hire their employees and run the business. For example, most supervisors in HTC are from Taiwan. Most employees that they have hired are Chinese Americans. HTC provides protection for new immigrants who cannot speak English fluently or have no US educational background. After gaining more work experiences in HTC, those immigrants have a better chance of entering large American companies.

In fact, HTC is not only a transnational company from Taiwan but also a community center where Chinese immigrants meet other Chinese Americans and exchange various messages about jobs or daily life. The author views HTC as a solution to the problem of how to define the population of Chinese immigrants in doing sampling. The questionnaires were delivered to the workers at HTC via two major methods: (1) in-person distribution at several social events and (2) in-person distribution via interpersonal networks. Each questionnaire includes both an English and a Chinese version.

This thesis had two aims in conducting a survey focusing on the employees at HTC. The first aim was to obtain "relevant" data. Through this survey, the author determined the subjects that could be interviewed and observed in the subsequent two steps. At the end of the questionnaire, the author asked the participants to provide the names of additional persons to interview or asked if they know any extended Chinese immigrant families. The second aim was to illustrate the general map of participants' socioeconomic backgrounds and media consumption habits, such as their frequency of use of Chinese-language media and the type of media they use.

After the survey targeting the employees at HTC, the author observed how the young Chinese immigrants relied on the Internet to watch Chinese TV and sing karaoke during their weekend parties. From the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010, the author attended five weekend parties held by the young Chinese immigrants working at HTC. Every party was held at the same house in a suburb of Houston. There were around ten people in attendance each time. Among the guests, there were six people who attended all of the parties. In addition to conducting observations, the author interviewed those six participants individually after they attended all five parties.

According to Potter, there are three different research activities involved in data-gathering: passive observation, active participation and active observation (Potter 1996, 101-104). The author was an active observer at those parties. This means that all of the participants knew of the existence of the author but that they did not know that the author was observing and recording their activity. The author tried to be passive inside the environment and not to disturb their behavior if at all possible.

Researchers assume that behavior is purposive and expressive of deeper values and beliefs (Marshall& Rossman, 1989). The people who attended those parties often participated in

two media-related activities. The first was watching non-English TV programs. In general, the TV programs that they watched most often were Chinese-language TV programs. But sometimes they watched Japanese TV series. The author did his best to remain passive and not to influence the guests' behavior. However, at the end of every party, the author asked the guests several questions related to this study. All of the participants knew that the author was a graduate student majoring in journalism at The University of Texas at Austin. They all accepted that their behavior was being observed and recorded by the author. They also understood that the questions were related to a research project about Chinese immigrant media studies.

In addition to watching Chinese-language TV and Japanese TV series, the guests sang karaoke often at the parties. As when they were watching TV, the author was still an active observer and did not disturb their behavior. In the process of singing karaoke, the author never participated and only observed what they sang and their reaction to the music videos. Similarly, at the end, the author asked the guests several questions related to the study. The advantage of observation is that researchers can see if people "say what they mean and mean what they say" (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979, 46). The questions after the parties helped the author to understand the young immigrants' behaviors more clearly.

The author not only observed the immigrants' media consumption habits at those parties but also interviewed six participants individually. Marshall and Rossman (1989) explain, "Typically, qualitative in-depth interviews are much more like conversations than formal, structured interviews. The researcher explores a few general topics to help uncover the participant's meaning perspective, but otherwise respects how the participants frames and structures the responses" (P.82). Because of the great time and resources necessary, it is hard to conduct structured interviewing. Semi-structured interviewing is an alternative method used in

this thesis. Although the author listed the guidelines for the interviews, during the interview process itself, the author made slight changes based on everyone's background.

Of the six persons, three are male and three are female. All of them work at HTC. Their age range is from 25 to 36. The information regarding their backgrounds is listed in Table 1. The person hosting these parties is Allen, who lives in the city of Sugar Land. All of the participants who attended the parties live near this area. Allen's house is a convenient place for the weekend gatherings. To put it simply, all of the participants are middle-class Chinese immigrants with college degrees.

During the third step, the author selected suitable Chinese immigrant families with which to conduct in-depth interviews. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1998), ethnographic interviewing is one of the most powerful methods of examining people's daily lives. The merits of the method include that the open-ended interview questions allow the interviewees some space within the discussion. For example, in interviewing young Chinese immigrants, instead of using a rigid format, researchers can gather more information about interviewees' specific media experience and their life stories.

There were two criteria used to select the targeted families: (1) diversity and (2) multi-generationality. Chinese immigrants include immigrants from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Because each of these areas has its own unique culture background and political stance, this thesis took into account families' ethnic backgrounds and acknowledged the diversity of the sample families. In addition, a particular focus of the thesis was the different media consumption habits of the different generations within Chinese immigrant families and discussion of their acculturation experiences and identities. The author hoped to identify the families including multiple generations from the survey. The author also asked the interviewees to introduce him to

suitable families. However, it was not easy for the author to find extended families living in one house among middle-class Chinese immigrants. Some of the young immigrants lived near their parents but not in the same house and some even lived in other states. The author used a compromise, interviewing the parents in person and the second generation by phone or Internet.

In the appendix, there are eight Chinese immigrant families listed who were selected as the subjects in this thesis. Most of those family members have been living in the United States for at least ten years. One family has even been in the United States over forty years, and two families have been living in the United States for over twenty years. The author believes that this thesis can outline the evolution of Chinese immigrant media in the past two decades based on their experience and life stories. One of the interviewees, Mr. Hsu, ran a Chinese immigrant newspaper located in Houston. His newspaper closed at the end of the 1990s. The author hopes that his story can enrich this thesis from the perspective of news production.

Chapter Four: Observation of Middle-Class Chinese immigrants

From the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010, the author attended five weekend parties held by HTC employees. The aim of these observations was to outline how the young immigrants use media during their gatherings and to discuss issues related to Chinese immigrants' experience of insulation and bi-cultural leisure activities. The weekend parties held at Allen's house are typical gatherings for the co-workers at HTC. Every party attracted seven to ten guests. Most of those attendees were workers at HTC, although sometimes former employees of HTC or other Chinese immigrants also attended the parties. Each party presented a good occasion to exchange information on subjects including jobs or daily life in the Chinese immigrant community.

The background on HTC

HTC is a transnational cell phone company from Taiwan. As a supplier for T-Mobile, it established its branch in Houston. Because of its affiliation with Taiwan, most of HTC's supervisors are sent from the headquarters in Taiwan, and they hire many Chinese immigrants in Houston. This is a typical company relying on the enclave economy. For HTC, immigrants can represent a bridge between Chinese people and Americans. On the one hand, because of their cultural and linguistic link with Taiwan, those Chinese immigrants are able to communicate with the office in Taipei without any difficulties and execute exact orders from Taipei. Most of the immigrants have been in the United States over 5 years and they are familiar with the local laws and customs of America. Some students from Taiwan obtain permanent legal status in American with the support of HTC. In addition, compared to other American company, HTC is more willing to hire Chinese immigrants, particularly those from Taiwan. Some Chinese immigrants without sufficient language ability or educational background can obtain a job at HTC. This way,

they can earn a living and obtain health insurance for themselves and their families. After gaining some work experience, they can find betters job at other American companies. Working at HTC becomes a stepping-stone for them as they seek to merge into the host society.

Background of the Host: Allen

After graduating from high school in Taipei, Allen came to Texas in 1995. At first, he attended the ESL school at Houston Baptist University to hone his English, and then he entered the undergraduate program at the same university. After he earned his bachelors degree, he married his wife, who is a second-generation Chinese immigrant, and now Allen is a US citizen living in Sugar Land in the suburbs of Houston. Sugar Land has attracted many middle-class Asian immigrants. Most people who attended the parties that the author observed also live in this area. They are middle-class immigrants from Taiwan or Hong Kong with undergraduate or graduate degrees from universities in the United States, and they range in age from 17 to 38.

What they did at those parties

Generally speaking, the parties can be divided into two parts. The first part is dinner. During the winter, the attendees eat food cooked in a hot pot. Most of the ingredients are brought at supermarkets in Chinatown. As with the Chinese-language presses, the supermarkets in Chinatown are also divided according to immigrants' ethnic backgrounds and identities. Generally, the supermarkets can be divided into four groups: Taiwanese, Hong Kong, Chinese and Vietnamese. The guests at these parties purchased most of their food at the Taiwanese supermarket and also some food at the Hong Kong supermarket. The food at the parties became a way of remembering the guests' countries of origin. They exchanged the latest information about Chinese food or snacks in the dinning room. For example, someone proclaimed that he or she had bought one snack imported from Taiwan. Others who were surprised at this asked him or

her which supermarket was selling it and how to buy it. These hot pot parties were organized based on memories from the guests' original countries. In the summer or spring, the attendees had BBQ parties, which are slightly different from hot pot parties. Though most of the ingredients are still brought from the Taiwanese or Hong Kong supermarkets, some of foods, such as steaks, are purchased in American supermarkets. As with the hot pot parties, the guests built their memory linkage in this case based on food, but they are also affected by Texas BBQ culture and have appropriated some local food or BBQ sauces. For example, they always insist on using BBQ sauces imported from Taiwan. However, one of the coworkers introduced one famous Austin BBQ sauces---Salt Lick. Most people appreciated this sauce and compared it with Taiwan's BBQ sauce.

After dinner, the guests always did one of two things: watched TV or sang karaoke

What They Watched

Allen does not subscribe to Direct TV or the TV network. He cannot watch any Chinese-language channels "directly". (Watching "directly" means that once viewers turn on the television, they can watch Chinese-language TV channels broadcast from their original countries.) However, in point of fact, Allen does not generally watch Chinese channels. During weekend parties, he watches Chinese-language TV with friends via the Internet. He admitted that he can get any Chinese TV program via Internet and that paying extra fees for Chinese-language channels is pointless for him. Surprisingly, at one-third of the parties, the time after dinner was spent watching Japanese series instead of Chinese TV series. Although there is a new Chinese TV channel that was introduced in 2009, its media content is not interesting to young Chinese immigrants. This TV channel bought old TV programs from Taiwan or broadcasts TV news produced by China. The guests only watched this channel once, and no one was interested. In

addition to watching Japanese series, the guests also watched movies from Hong Kong and entertainment shows from Taiwan. According to Allen, he seldom watches Chinese TV or Japanese TV by himself. When he is alone, he always watches English channels. However, what he is interested in is not English news but rather English movies. He gathers English news information from the radio. He always listens to English-language news on the way to his office.

Karaoke as Immigrant Media Consumption

In addition to TV watching, the most important activity at (or even the aim of) these parties is karaoke. The word *karaoke* includes two components: *kara*, meaning empty, and *oke* meaning orchestra. Karaoke, originally a Japanese word, refers to prerecorded musical accompaniments designed for amateur singing. At the beginning, singing karaoke meant that one had to sing in front of strangers in a bar. It is possible that some people enjoy this feeling of impersonating a star at a concert, but for other people, the experience is a strange one. Later, in Taiwan, a new business called KTV emerged. KTV is an abbreviation of Karaoke TV and refers to a small room or cabinet equipped with a large screen TV and a karaoke machine. Taiwanese businessmen divided their original karaoke bars into several small rooms. In these small rooms, waiters would serve drinks, including beer or liquor, as well as snacks and meals. People would watch the music videos on the large screen and sing their favorite songs. These businessmen even developed a set of convenient computer systems to serve their customers. In addition to offering a big-screen TV, each cabinet was equipped with a PC. Customers would thus be able to play music videos through the PC.

Singing KTV became a fashionable activity in Taiwan and eventually in Hong Kong and China. Singing KTV in Chinese culture is like clubbing in America. It became a popular cultural activity that has even reconstructed the Chinese music industry because KTV has

become an indispensable promotion channel for pop music. If a pop song is popular on KTV, this means that the song or its singer will be popular in the market.

In North America, many Chinese families also own their karaoke machines in their living rooms. Nevertheless, family karaoke machines still present some disadvantages. First, the families must buy lots of music videos from their countries of origin. Secondly, it is impossible for them to own the latest music videos. These are not issues for older immigrants. For them, singing karaoke evokes memories from their homeland. They prefer the older songs that were popular before they left their homeland. However, the young immigrants are not satisfied with family karaoke machines and prefer to sing KTV in Chinatown.

With the development of the Internet, however, this situation is changing even further. Nowadays, anyone who owns a computer can download the latest music videos particularly designed for karaoke. Take Allen, for example. He owns an excellent home theater system and karaoke machine in his living room. To simulate the experience of KTV, he also built a PC system similar to that used for KTV. Guests can play any music video through this PC as they would do with KTV. Additionally, Allen can download the latest music videos using this PC. Through these types of technology, Chinese immigrants in America can enjoy the newest trends in Taiwan or China.

KTV became a particular form of media in the Chinese world. The author has found that the music videos played at the parties included not only Chinese songs from Taiwan but also songs in other languages, including Korean pop songs and Cantonese songs. This represents the latest developments in pop culture in Taiwan. Nowadays, Korean drama and music are popular in Taiwan. In addition to Taiwan, Hong Kong has become a pop culture center in the Chinese

world. According to estimates by the author, among 10 music videos, there are 7 Chinese pop songs from Taiwan, 2 Cantonese songs from Hong Kong and one Korean song.

Surprisingly, Allen can sing Cantonese songs smoothly.

> When I was in college, I had a part-time job in a Chinese restaurant owned by a Chinese boss from Hong Kong. That is the reason why I can sing Cantonese songs. In the 1990s, pop music and movies were very popular in Taiwan. Most Taiwanese girls in Houston liked to date boys from Hong Kong. They thought Hong Kong was a fashionable place.

The Cultural Center is Asia, not New York or Hollywood

Surprisingly, the author found that in these young people's minds, Asia is the popular cultural center. Allen's wife, a 1.5 generation Chinese immigrant from Taiwan, pays more attention to pop culture from Taiwan or Hong Kong. She did not even know that *Green Day* is a popular band in America. Similarly, others of Allen's compatriots kept their eyes on any new trends in Taipei and Hong Kong. They were also planting to fly to Las Vegas to see a Chinese pop star perform. From the perspective of some western communication scholars, in the system of global communication, the direction of cultural flows is from "western centers" to "peripheral countries". But to these individuals, the cultural flow is from "peripheral countries" to "western centers".

Allen's wife, a graduate of UT, expressed her feeling about Houston.

> In my mind, Houston is a small and earthy place. I don't think it is a big city. For example, at the end of the 1990s, there was a female superstar from Hong Kong holding a concert in Houston. However, unlike in California, there were not enough Chinese immigrants living here, and the company holding that concert lost a lot of money. After that, there is no one who wanted to take the risk of inviting a pop star from Taiwan or Hong Kong to sing. I am very sorry about that. Compared to people in Taiwan and Hong Kong, we are very earthy, and we always follow their lead.

Similarly, Jean also expressed her feeling about Texas.

> Every time I went back to Taiwan, my friends always asked me, "Why are you so earthy?" Though they have some stereotypes about Texas, I have to acknowledge that we have some gaps between us. I cannot follow the latest trends in Taiwan."

Watching Chinese-language television or music videos is a process of absorbing the latest fashion information in Asian countries. While one person was singing karaoke at these parties, others would be watching the music videos and studying the latest fashions from Taiwan and Hong Kong. Sometimes the female coworkers ordered their clothes through an online store based in Taiwan. Ironically, this famous online store is called *Tokyo Clothing*. Its brand image implies that its clothes are similar to those worn in Japan.

Young immigrants from Hong Kong are also fascinated with pop culture from Taiwan. Christie immigrated to the United States with her parents from Hong Kong in 1998. She finished high school in Chicago and then moved to Houston. When she was in Hong Kong, she accepted UK's education, which means that she can speak English very well but cannot speak Mandarin as well. She admitted that before she moved to Houston, she always spoke English. Now she works at a Taiwanese company, and she has to speak Mandarin every day. Her hobby at home is watching Taiwanese idol dramas. Therefore, she is very familiar with young stars in Taiwan. At the weekend parties, most of the songs she sang were the latest Mandarin songs from Taiwan.

> When I was in Chicago, I had no Chinese classmates, and most of my classmates were Americans. Here, everyone speaks Mandarin, so I speak Mandarin very well after having stayed in Houston for three years. In Chicago, I always watched English TV and magazines. In Houston, I watch Cantonese TV channels from Hong Kong or Mandarin TV channels from Taiwan.

Globalized or Bi-cultural Characteristics

Immigrants' social or economical backgrounds affect their acculturation within their host society. Tom, born in 1975, is a supervisor at HTC. His father was a doctor in Hong Kong, and his mother is Taiwanese. He was born in Taiwan and attended the Taipei American School.

After elementary school, he moved to Hong Kong to attend junior high school. Two years later, his father sent him to a boarding school in the UK. Finally, he went to the University of Houston in the 1990s and got his bachelor degree. Compared to other young Chinese immigrants, he has fewer culture and language barriers to face in the host society. That is the reason why he was awarded a position as a supervisor at HTC. This Taiwanese company need his ability to communicate and cooperate with American companies such as T-Mobile. Because of his job, he has a greater chance of making contact with Americans. Among those young Chinese immigrants, he is an opinion leader, introducing others to what is happening outside Chinatown. With his globalized background, there is no barrier for him in facing the host society.

> In my opinion, a globalized background is the best. I can survive anywhere. There are no language or culture barriers for me in the United States. However, when you are over 20 or 30-something, you have to make a decision: to be Chinese or American. I choose the former: to be a happy Chinese person living in the United States.

Allen's wife agreed with this notion.

> Though I am proud to say I am an American, I believe that being bi-cultural is the best. It is better than being purely Chinese or purely American.

Insulation from the host society

Every interviewee agreed that even though they have college or graduate degrees, it is still very hard for them to speak English as well as Americans and enter the host society. Beth, a woman from Taiwan, has been living in Houston for over 9 years. Because of her religious beliefs, her circle of friends is not limited to Chinatown. However, this doesn't mean that she has a lot of American friends. Most of her friends are immigrants from other Asian countries such as Japan or South Korea.

Allen and Tom both agreed with that Chinese immigrants form a unique community outside the host society. This community is very small, and almost everyone knows each other. Although they attended different universities in the 1990s, they both had some common friends. Allen noted:

> When I was in college in the 1990s, there was no Internet. I had nothing to do at night, and I could only hang around with my friends in Karaoke bars in Chinatown. I remember that there were only three Karaoke bars in Chinatown. No matter which bar you went to, you always encountered some friends you knew. In addition, it was very expensive to make a phone call to Taiwan in the 1990s. To save money, I only could phone my parents once a month.
> In college, Americans had their own circles. ABCs (American Born Chinese) had their own circles. We have our own circles. But I believe it is easier for ABCs to make friends with Americans. For example, my cousin is an ABC growing up in a community without Chinese immigrants. He is used to getting along with "white" people, and most of his friends are "white". Bu, after he entered senior high school, he started to seek his identity. He learned Chinese and accepted that he is Chinese.

What Allen called "we" represents international students from Taiwan and Hong Kong. Tom also illustrated what he saw on campus in the 1990s:

> I remember that at that time at the University of Houston, our Chinese Student Association had around 800 students. Chinese means those students from Taiwan and Hong Kong. There were few students from China in the 1990s. It was very easy to meet Chinese students on campus. Sometimes I just smoked a cigarette during the break between my courses. I could meet a new friend from Taiwan or Hong Kong [that way]. And at night, my new friends and I went to a Karaoke bar in Chinatown.

Both interviewees believe that nowadays, the Chinese immigrant community is different than it was in the 1990s. First of all, an influx of international students from China changed the demographic composition of the Chinese immigrant community. Comparatively, the number of international students from Taiwan and Hong Kong decreased dramatically. Secondly, the Internet has played an important role in changing people's behavior. Before, without the

Internet, Chinese students worked and played in groups. The Chinese student community is closer now. Tom made a comment regarding the role of the Internet.

> The Internet really changed our lives. With the Internet, now everyone stays at home and does his own business. It makes us individualized.

Political Identities

Allen believes that he is also Taiwanese and Chinese. However, he does not think that China is his home country, and he even criticized China's military parades. He does not identify with China politically, but he identifies with China culturally.

> For me, China means the People's Republic of China. It is different from Taiwan. But, in cultural terms, I think that China has a powerful influence in Asia. Not just for Taiwan. Including Japan and Korea. There is no conflict between the Taiwanese and Chinese. But I introduce myself as Chinese.
> Look at the military parade in Beijing: it looks like what we did 20 years ago. It's so stupid. Nowadays, only North Korea would do this. I think that China is still an authoritarian country.

When I asked him this questions about politics, he seemed a little uneasy. In my opinion, he is a Chinese person and not a Taiwanese person. Taiwanese is a political term that has been manipulated over 20 years. The right-wing politicians have tried to split Taiwan from China politically, culturally and even racially. They have distinguished "Taiwanese" from "Chinese". If a person does not agree that he or she is Taiwanese, that person will be labeled "unpatriotic". That is probably the reason why he felt uneasy about this question.

Though most of the other people did not have a strong desire to stress their political identities or had no feelings about political identities, they all agreed that they are Chinese and indicated that they are from Taiwan or Hong Kong. From the perspective of pop culture, they obviously identified with Taiwan and Hong Kong instead of China. The responses reflect the intra-group diversity of Chinese immigrants. Among the interviewees, the first generation

immigrants never called themselves Americans, but the 1.5 generation immigrants, those who were born in Asia but grew up in America, called themselves Americans. However, all of them agreed with that they are still different from the “real” Americans: “white” people. There is still some degree of insulation between them and the host society. Surprisingly, the author found that they do not mind this. As proposed by Tom and by Allen’s wife, being bi-cultural or globalized sometimes becomes an advantage for them. They believe that because of this feature, they are very open-minded.

Chapter Five: Interviewing Chinese Immigrant Families

In this chapter, the author interviewed seven multi-generational families. Through the interviews, the author will illustrate the different patterns of media consumption among different generations and outline the evolution of identities from the first generation to the second generation. Finally, this chapter will also discuss the conflicts between the different generations.

The evolution of Chinese media consumption

The thesis research indicates that the main readers of the Chinese immigrant newspapers are first-generation immigrants over 40. Two interviewees from Taiwan said that they buy *the World Journal* every day. Immigrants from China and Hong Kong sometimes read *the World Journal,* but they more often read the *Southern Chinese Daily* for free. One interviewee said, "It is my habit. Before I came to the United States, I always read two newspapers in Taiwan every day. Now I buy one copy of *the World Journal* in the supermarket in Chinatown every day". As also indicated by the HTC survey data, although this interviewee is over 60 years old, he is able to use the computer and issue emails to his friend every day. Because of his habits, he still wants to read a "real" newspaper. The author also identified gender differences. For example, those two interviewees who read *the World Journal* every day are interested in the political section of the newspaper. In contrast, their wives are more interested in soft articles and the entertainment news.

The main reason why the male Chinese immigrants use Chinese-language media is to read about political news in China and Taiwan. In addition to reading about political news in the Chinese-language newspaper, they also watched TV programs about current affairs in Taiwan on cable TV. After absorbing the relevant information, they liked to discuss political issues or argue

with their friends. There were several common topics of discussion: Taiwanese domestic politics, relations between China and America and the relations between Taiwan and China.

Their discussions about those issues are related to the reasons why they immigrated to the United States. Most of the older individuals interviewed for this thesis have been living in the United States for over 15 years. Political factors are the main reason why they immigrated to America. Political factors include two issues. The first issue has to do with China. For immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong, communist China is a threat to their survival. Although they view themselves as Chinese, they do not agree with the communist ideology. One immigrant from Taiwan expressed his feeling about a TV series from China. “Sometimes I watched the TV series on cable TV, but I don’t like the ideology of the communists and their official stance about the People’s Liberation Army”. “They tend to distorted history and glorify the communists”. Those older immigrants have conflicting emotions regarding China. They identify with and appreciate Chinese culture, but they do not like and may even disdain the Chinese communist party.

In addition to the threat from China, some immigrants from Taiwan feel uneasy about Taiwan’s domestic politics, and this may have helped to inspire their immigration to America. Even though they do not live in Taiwan now, they still pay a great deal of attention to Taiwan’s political news. Almost every male immigrant over 40 years old from Taiwan interviewed for this thesis watches a current affairs TV program every day on cable TV or via the Internet. These individuals admitted that they like to discuss those topics with those of their friends who espouse the same political stance.

Female immigrants over 40 are not as interested in political issues as the males. They prefer to read the entertainment news in Chinese-language newspapers and watch Chinese TV

series via cable TV. This thesis found that all female immigrants like to watch idol dramas from Taiwan and TV series from Hong Kong. However, the author was more curious about their preferences with regard to Korean and Japanese TV series. According to the data, young immigrants prefer to watch Japanese TV series, while older immigrants prefer to watch Korean TV series.

The older individuals were able to watch TV series via the Internet. Mrs. Hsu, who is over 60 years old, recently learned to use YouTube to watch dramas with the help of her daughter.

> My daughter set up everything for me. What I have to do is just turn on her laptop. Then I can use her computer to watch the latest idol drama from Taiwan. Without the Internet, I have to go to the video store in Chinatown to rent DVDs. Now I don't have to spend money, and I can watch the latest TV series through the Internet.

One immigrant living far away from Chinatown recalled how in the 1990s, some Chinese immigrants in her community even formed the "Bear Creek Housewife Association", an informal organization, one of whose aims was to exchange videos.

> We Chinese housewives created this organization. Our community is far away from Chinatown. It was inconvenient to rent videos. Cost is another issue. If you wanted to watch all the TV series from Hong Kong or Taiwan, you had to spend lots of money. Because of this organization, everyone just rented one or two TV series and exchanged them with other members. Most of the housewives came from Taiwan or Hong Kong. Some housewives stayed in America with their kids, while their husbands had to stay in Asia to make money. They felt bored living in America. So they watched these TV series from Taiwan or Hong Kong to kill time.

With the development of the Internet, all interviewees said that they do not rent videos anymore. The author found that even the older individuals owned their personal computers and had learned the computer skills necessary to gather the information that they needed. Mr. Chen, who is a retired CEO from Taiwan, uses his computer every day to read the business news from Taiwan and trade stocks.

Because of the rise in new technologies, there are no young immigrants reading Chinese and English newspapers regularly. Rather, these individuals rely on the Internet and cable TV to obtain Chinese news from their countries of origin. Christie, 28, moved to America in 1998. She even relies on online media from Hong Kong to find out about what happens in the United States. Because she does not read English newspapers or English TV news, all of her information comes from Chinese online media out of Hong Kong. Her process of ascertaining the news or finding out about stories happening in America is very interesting. The process can be illustrated in the following model.

The event = western news agencies = Chinese media in Hong Kong =Yahoo in Hong Kong = Christie

From this model, we can infer that Christie relies on Hong Kong's media infrastructure to find out about events happening in the United States. She said, "I found out about the stories about H1N1 through the media from Hong Kong. When H1N1 was raging in Houston, I still got the latest stories in Houston through the media in Hong Kong".

Christie does not read Chinese immigrant newspapers, but her mother and father do. The *Sing Tao Daily*, one of "big three" and a paper that targets immigrants from Hong Kong, is not available in Houston. The *Southern Chinese Daily* is the most important Chinese newspaper for this family. In addition to reading the stories in this newspaper, Christie's parents also find their jobs in Chinatown through the ads in this newspaper. Her parents were never educated at all in the United States, and they cannot speak English very well. It would be very difficult for them to live in America without living in Chinatown. In this case, we can understand that the "Enclave Economy" indeed provides protection for Chinese immigrants.

The function of enclave economies in terms of social mobility

An enclave economy not only provides protection for Chinese immigrants but also helps some immigrants to acculturate into the host society. Katie Wong, a female immigrant from China, now works for a petroleum company in Houston. She immigrated to the United States in 1994 and earned her MBA degree at the University of Houston in 2000. Before she obtained her job at the American company, she worked for a Chinese shipping company based in Hong Kong. This Chinese company mainly provides shipping services for companies in China. The Chinese companies ship their goods to America. Katie had to represent the Chinese companies in their communications with Americans. Through those work experiences, she sharpened her English and became familiar with American culture. The enclave economy helped her to acculturate in the United States. Now her annual salary is around 70,000 U.S. dollars.

Eden is a woman from Taiwan. She lives with her husband in suburban Houston. Eden immigrated to America when she was 17 years old, in 2001. While she was in college, she had a part-time job at HTC. Because she finished her high school education in America, she can speak English more fluently than can some other immigrants from Taiwan. At HTC, she was a liaison for the American companies. Because of her Taiwanese background, she could also communicate with the supervisors from Taiwan without difficulty. After she earned her college degree at the University of Houston, she began working for a petroleum company in Houston. Her annual salary is around 45,000 dollars.

These two cases can be viewed as successful examples of acculturation. Before they entered mainstream companies, these individuals worked in the enclave economy and began the acculturation process. Though Katie and Eden still view themselves as Chinese, they both claimed that they seldom use Chinese-language media. Both said that CNN is their main news

source. However, they do not read English newspapers or watch local TV news. Like other interviewees who watch English-language news, they were more familiar with national news than with local news.

Katie's Chinese background sometimes makes her embarrassed. She did not answer whether she felt uncomfortable with U.S. news organizations' stance toward China. However, she said,

> Democracy is not the most important thing for China at this time. China has to develop its economy. If China has enough money, it won't be the underdog anymore.
> Recently what Obama has done has been right. I don't understand why he claimed that he would take a harsh stance toward China two weeks ago. Cooperation between China and America is good for both countries.

Katie Wang is a typical middle-class immigrant from China. She lives with her son and parents in suburban Houston. Her son, born in America, speaks English fluently. Because Katie is a single mother, her parents have to stay in America for several months every year to take care for their grandson.

Originally, Katie did not subscribe to Chinese-language cable TV. She said, "Without Chinese-language TV, staying in America would be torture for my parents. I set up Chinese-language TV for them". There are two televisions in her house. One is in the living room, while the other is in her bedroom. Generally speaking, her parents watch Chinese-language TV in the living room, while Katie and her son watch English-language TV in her bedroom. CCTV-4 is her parents' favorite channel. CCTV (Central China Television) is China's largest TV station. The aim of CCTV-4 is to serve Chinese people living overseas. It provides not only news but also entertainment programs. However, CCTV in China presents an official stance, and traditionally it is considered a "serious" TV station. Therefore, they also watch some local Chinese TV channels such JCTV and HNTV. The media contents of those TV channels are not official and is

similar to that in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The interviewees prefer to watch entertainment shows and TV series on those channels.

In addition to Chinese-language television, Katie's parents also read the free Chinese-language newspapers distributed in every Chinese supermarket. However, unlike immigrants from Taiwan, they did not buy Chinese-language newspapers. The main Chinese-language newspapers are all run by immigrants from Taiwan. These newspapers use traditional Chinese characters instead of simplified Chinese characters. Immigrants from China do not have a strong motivation to buy these newspapers.

Language and second-generation immigrants

Katie's son, Max, is twelve years old. At home, Katie and Max's grandparents speak Chinese with him, but he responds to them in English. Because of cultural and linguistic differences, Max is not interested in Chinese media at all. Katie wishes that her son would speak Chinese more frequently. Every weekend, she sends her son to Chinese school to learn Chinese with other Chinese children. However, she discovered that the students at the Chinese school only spoke Chinese with their teacher; the language that the children used to speak with each other was still English.

This is the problem that many Chinese parents have experienced. Most Chinese parents ask their children to learn Chinese. However, it is not easy to ask a child to speak Chinese well only by attending Chinese-language school on the weekends. Mrs. Hsu has three daughters and one son. The three daughters are all more than 30 years old. The son, born in America, is only 18 years old. The three daughters are able to speak Chinese very fluently, but the son can only speak single Chinese words. Mrs. Hsu believes that this gap is related to the consumption of Chinese-language media.

> At the beginning, I did what most Chinese parents did: I sent my three daughters to the Chinese-language school. Additionally, I asked them to practice writing Chinese. But they didn't like using Chinese. After all, there is no environment for them to speak Chinese in America. Though they have to speak Chinese with me, they communicate with each other in English. Later, I found an effective way to help them to learn Chinese. I asked them to watch Chinese videos with me. Now, they are still unable to read and write in Chinese, but at least they can speak Chinese very fluently.

There are two reasons why most Chinese parents ask their children to learn Chinese. First, they hope their children to understand that they are Chinese. Learning Chinese helps to preserve traditional culture and values. After learning Chinese, their children are able to communicate with their parents or grandparents without difficulty. Secondly, they hope that their children will enjoy more advantages in Asia if they learn Chinese. In the context of China's rise, most Chinese parents believe that bilingualism will bring their children better opportunities in the future. Katie stressed that this is the most important reason to her. She hopes that her son will be able to not only speak Chinese but also read and write in Chinese. That is why she has brought her son back to China during every summer vacation.

Biculturalism and globalized characteristics

Because of her U.S. educational background and work experience, staying in America is only one of Katie's choices. Unlike many other former immigrants from China, Katie is seeking the opportunity to return to China.

> Now I earn a fixed annual salary at this company. Although I am satisfied with my current life, there is no room for further development for me. I hope that I can go back to China and work for transnational companies or do business between China and America. In addition, I hope that my son can attend an international school in China. This will make him familiar with both countries. It will be very helpful for his future.

What Katie expressed is indeed many Chinese parents' thought. Because of the booming economy in Asia, they hope that their children will be bicultural and enjoy more advantages in China or America. This new trend has not been discussed in previous studies on

Chinese immigrants. Before, the ideal experience of acculturation was into American society. Now, those young Chinese professionals hope to have global advantages. Unlike their fathers or mothers, whose sole aim is to survive in America, those young Chinese immigrants enjoy their life in America but value their bicultural advantages. They want to acculturate into mainstream society, but they don't want to be purely American. This new trend can also be found among the young Chinese immigrants working at HTC.

Identity and acculturation of the second generation

Previous studies of the Chinese immigrant media have stressed the intra-group diversity within the Chinese community. However, this thesis research indicates that such diversity is fading among second-generation Chinese people. The author asked Katie's son Max, "Are you Chinese or American?" and received a interesting response.

> There is no American in the United States. Everyone here is an immigrant. European people came first. Then Africans came, and Latinos followed. We Asians came last. I am an Asian.

Christie's younger sister is now in high school. She left Hong Kong when she was ten years old. Unlike those of her sister, most of her friends are immigrants from China.

> My facebook is in Chinese. Most of my friends are Chinese. We text message using Chinese. The only difference between us is that I use traditional Chinese, whereas they use simplified Chinese. Instead of using msn, I use QQ. Because most of my friends use QQ, in order to communicate with them, I have to use QQ.[1]

Alvin is a Chinese immigrant from Singapore. When he immigrated to America, he was eight years old. Now he is 36 years old, and he is a supervisor at a branch of Chase Bank near Chinatown. Though he cannot write Chinese, he can speak Chinese fluently. To develop the Chinese immigrant market, Chase Bank needs someone like Alvin, who is familiar with both the mainstream society and the Chinese immigrant community.

[1] QQ is a kind of software similar to msn messenger. It is very popular in China.

> Before I was 20 years old, I thought I was an American. My parents also viewed me as an American. But I don't know why. When I grew up, I felt that I was a Chinese American. I started to speak Chinese, eat Chinese food and learn traditional Chinese culture and values. I know many second-generation Chinese immigrants have similar experiences. Maybe they don't necessarily view themselves as Chinese, but they view themselves as Asian American.

Conflicts between two generations

Sometimes, second-generation Chinese individuals experience conflict or tension with their parents. Mrs. Hsu's son, Christopher Hsu, is 18 years old. He is totally Americanized and cannot speak Chinese fluently. Though his mother wants to train him to speak Chinese, he can only understand what his mother says and responds to her in English. Like other American young men, he relies on the Internet to get whatever information he wants. His parents acknowledge that it is impossible to ask their son to be Chinese. They have accepted that their son is an American. But being "an American" in his parents' mind means being a "white" guy. In fact, at Christopher's school, the majority of his classmates are African Americans. His parents are very concerned about this issue. Though they do not want to be racist in front of their son, they feel a little uneasy about the son. Mrs. Hsu mentions her son's prom.

> My son asked a black girl to be his prom date recently. He wondered if I would be unhappy about that. He did not tell me this directly, but he told his sister. He wondered if I would be angry about it.

Among the sample families in this thesis, half of the second-generation immigrants married white people. Traditionally, Chinese families still cannot accept their children marrying black women or men. Mrs. and Mr. Hsu immigrated to America almost 30 years. They are trying to adjust their thoughts. Mrs. Hsu said,

> If he really marries a black woman, I will simply accept his decision. But I tell him that he can't have a girlfriend before he begins college.

As a second-generation Chinese immigrant, Christopher Hsu has acculturated to American society very successfully. However, "American society" means a sub-group of American society. For example, in discussing the issue of college, he said,

> The white guys are richer, so they go to private universities such as Yale or Harvard. I only want to attend a public university.

He views himself as an African American inside, though he appears Asian American on the outside. He likes to eat burgers instead of rice. He cares deeply about NBA games. ESPN is the only channel he can watch with his father in the living room, though he usually stays in his room to browse the Internet or watch TV via the Internet. Unlike Katie Wang, Mr. and Mr. Hsu have no educational background in the United States. When they immigrated to America in 1983, they were over 40 years old. In Taiwan, Mr. Hsu worked for the Hilton Hotel Corporation. Basic English conversation was not a problem for him. After arriving in America, the family started a small business near the African American community. Because of socioeconomic factors, they cannot acculturate into the host society.

Eden's family immigrated to America in 2001 when her father was 45 years old. Her brother is a 1.5-generation immigrant who now goes to school at an elite high school in Houston. The two children's father has no U.S. educational background and cannot speak English fluently. He is an airport driver serving Chinese immigrants. Similarly, the father cannot acculturate into the host society successfully. However, his son views himself as an Asian American. Eden said,

> In my home, two different people lives under one roof. My father is isolated from American society. He is a very traditional Chinese man. My brother is an American. They have a lot of conflicts. My father and grandmother watch Chinese TV in the living room. My brother only stays in his room so that he can do what he likes. My father and brother live in two different worlds.

Based on these cases, the author finds that socioeconomic factors contribute whether first-generation immigrants can acculturate into the host society successfully. These

socioeconomic factors include education and linguistic ability. Unlike their children, those first-generation immigrants do not have a solid socioeconomic foundation to support them in acculturating into America, so they could be marginalized. The outcome is that there will be many conflicts between the different generations.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

RQ 1: How do new technologies change those immigrants' consumption habits?

Most of the young interviewees (those under 40) do not read newspapers. They have their own way of accessing the news: the Internet. Like mainstream newspapers, the immigrant press is also changing as a result of the Internet. Based on the interviews conducted for this thesis, it seemed that only Chinese immigrants over 40 read the Chinese-language newspapers. However, even older readers are decreasing the frequency of their newspaper reading and beginning to learn how to use the Internet. Some of the elderly individuals have their own laptops and use email every day. However, they do not give up reading the newspaper purely because of their reading habits.

Though they still pay $1.50 to buy a newspaper, what they care about is stories from their country of origin rather than local affairs in their community. This tendency is reflected in their Internet and cable TV use. Because of the intra-group diversity of the Chinese immigrant community, the major Chinese immigrant press cannot satisfy all immigrants with different backgrounds. The Internet and cable TV give these immigrants more choices. The author found that cable TV is the most important form of media for older immigrants. In particular, main American companies such as Direct TV and Dish Network now can provide packages for Chinese immigrants. Before, Chinese immigrants had to rely on the major Chinese immigrant newspapers to get information.

Most of the immigrant press claims to be the bridge between immigrants and the host society, but this function is not important for middle-class immigrants. Nevertheless, immigrant media can be an information exchange platform for an enclave economy. The author believes the ads published in the newspaper are more important than news story. Though most readers

claimed that they do not read the local stories in the newspapers, they explained that they sometimes browse the ads when they need a service: for example, when they are looking for a restaurant or a job. From this perspective, the immigrant press still serves a positive function for the Chinese immigrants.

RQ2: How does the intra-group diversity affect their media consumption habits?

Previous studies have shown that the Chinese immigrant community consists of a diverse body of immigrants from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South East Asian countries. Each group has its own cultural background and political stances. Those studies have also encouraged communication scholars to distinguish between Chinese immigrants based on their socioeconomic backgrounds (Lu, 2001; Lum, 2001; Wong, 2004). Intra-group diversity is the most important feature of Chinese immigrants. Through interviews, the author found that most Chinese immigrants do not have a common identity within their own ethnic community. Their media consumption habits show this tendency. Although they pay much more attention to the news in their countries of origin, the immigrants do not care about the local news in their community. Sometimes, they care about the news in the English-language media context. However, such interest is often limited to cases of foreign policy in Asia or to very important national news about issues such as health insurance. Even some of the young immigrants with higher education backgrounds who are used to using English-language media focus on the national news instead of news about Texas or Houston.

This diverse feature reflects the characteristics of the Chinese immigrant press. “The big three” represent three different ethnic backgrounds: China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. New technology stresses the intra-group diversity of the Chinese immigrant community. Nowadays, Chinese immigrants can find out what is happening in their countries of origin right in their

living room. The author believes that the convenience of new media strengthens not only the linkage between immigrants and their original countries but also the diversity among those immigrants. Now it is more convenient for immigrants to select their favorite channels and programs from their original countries. For example, immigrants from China watch CCTV 4, immigrants from Taiwan watch CTV, and immigrants from Hong Kong watch TVB.

The Internet provides more choices for immigrants. In particular, young immigrants do not need to subscribe to cable TV, and they can watch most TV programs from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Like cable TV, the Internet provides more individualized service than traditional media. It can satisfy everyone's needs. Originally, the largest Chinese language newspaper, *the World Journal* from Taiwan, attracted the bulk of readers from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong. Now, however, no one major outlet can dominate the Chinese immigrant media market. Everyone can find media content to match his or her tastes and political stance. One interviewee stressed that the Internet has really changed his personal connections. He believes that it make young Chinese immigrants more individualistic.

The author finds that these closer links to immigrants' countries of origin via the Internet have another impact on immigrant acculturation. Because they consume media content from their original countries via the Internet, they view the events happening in the host society through the news frames constructed by the media in their original countries. Cultural values and ideologies from the original country still influence their thinking via those media. In addition, it is impossible for foreign media to cover local events in Texas or Houston. Relying on foreign media for information thus creates a sense of alienation from the host community. With the exception of national news or very significant events, what is happening in the neighborhood is simply not covered.

RQ3: How do those immigrants rely on the "enclave economy"?

The interview data collected by the author indicate that the Chinese enclave economy indeed provides protection for immigrants. There are no second-generation immigrants working at HTC. The majority of the Chinese employees working at HTC are first-generation Chinese immigrants. Of 30 Chinese employees, only a few employees are 1.5-gerneration Chinese immigrants who were born in foreign countries but grew up in the United States. Therefore, the author concludes that the Chinese enclave economy protects first-generation immigrants and some 1.5-generation immigrants who cannot acculturate into the host society. Most second-generation Chinese immigrants have acculturated into America, and they do not need to work for the enclave companies.

Most of the Chinese employees acknowledged that HTC is a stepping-stone for them. Though the salaries there are lower than at the other big petroleum companies, at least they have a niche in this transnational company from Taiwan. They become a bridge between the headquarters in Taiwan and local U.S. companies. Here, they can add to their work experience and increase their chance of contacting other U.S. companies. After gaining sufficient work experience, they can find a better job at American companies. Because of the company's affiliation with Taiwan, one-third of its employees in Houston are immigrants from Taiwan. The office became a Chinese immigrant community. Coworkers in the office exchange various messages on subjects including jobs and daily life. In particular, immigrants who experience language barriers can find out what is happening in the host society through this community center. In addition to providing economic protection and a message exchange center, HTC also hires Chinese graduate students and applies for green cards for them if the employees meet

certain conditions. Two of the interviewees mentioned in the thesis obtained their green cards using this approach.

Though HTC as an enclave economy serves a positive function in terms of acculturation, it also has some negative implications that hamper immigrants' acculturation process. Most employees admitted that they do not have to speak English at the office and that their personal connections are limited to a small circle of Chinese immigrants. Their social isolation from the host community in this capacity was shown in the survey chapter. One of the enclave economy's positive functions is that it provides a protection for those who do not have a U.S. education degree and who experience language barriers. However, after they have come to depend on the enclave economy for a period of years, it is hard for these immigrants to acculturate into the host society. The positive function of the enclave thus becomes a negative function.

The author has concluded that the immigrants' socioeconomic backgrounds decide whether the enclave economy has a positive or negative function. Based on the data that the author collected, we can conclude that young immigrants who have U.S. educational backgrounds and speak English fluently view the enclave economy as a stepping-stone. Though they also admitted that they have few opportunities to speak English, and though most of their friends in America are Chinese immigrants, there is no barrier to their acculturation into the host society. On the other hand, those who have no U.S. educational background or cannot speak English fluently view the enclave economy as a form of protection. However, the enclave economy also becomes a barrier to their acculturation. They feel uneasy when they face the host society. Usually, the older immigrants have a tendency to depend on the enclave economy much more.

RQ4: How do they enjoy their bicultural pleasure and form their cultural hybridity?

Unlike second-generation immigrants, both young and old first-generation immigrants feel isolated from the host society. Even though some interviewees did not indicate this clearly, they implied it through conversation with the author. They believe that this insulation occurs naturally, and they do not view it as a kind of racial discrimination. Though the older immigrants without U.S. educational backgrounds tend to believe that there is still some discrimination in the host society, most young immigrants believe that compared to other societies, American society is fair; they also feel that they have a good chance of being successful in the United States.

According to Lu (2001), previous studies have shown that Chinese immigrants either assimilated into the host society or were restricted to their enclave community. Socioeconomic factors decide if an immigrant can assimilate into the host society. Early immigrants with limited educational backgrounds were limited to the enclave community. After 1965, new immigrants who enjoyed a U.S. education assimilated into America successfully and did not live in the old Chinatowns.(Lu, 2001, 216). They were forced into the melting pot dominated by European values. After interviewing 35 Chinese immigrants from China, Lu found that those immigrants with professional backgrounds developed bicultural attitudes for their children and themselves (Lu, 2001, 216). “It has been a myth that middle-class Asian Americans have assimilated into American culture and these uptown families do not have their own ethnic enclaves” (Lu, 2001, 217).

This thesis agrees with the acculturation pattern indicated by Lu. The interviewees who immigrated to the United States after they had turned 40 years old did not enjoy any educational opportunities in the United States, and the author found that they experienced many linguistic or cultural barriers. Even though they have college degrees in their original countries, they still have

barriers to acculturation into the host society. They must rely on the enclave community to support their livelihoods, and they feel uneasy outside the enclave community. However, young immigrants with U.S. educational backgrounds are more confident and have more of a chance to acculturate into America. Though they admitted that they still feel insulated from the host society, they do not mind this insulation and develop their own biculturalism.

The booming development of the Internet is one of the factors that drive these younger individuals to create their own form of biculturalism. For example, these young immigrants have money and leisure time to shop at malls in the suburbs where they live. In the winter, they book plane tickets to Aspen to enjoy skiing. In the summer, they take cruises to Caribbean islands for vacation. Their lives are similar to that of any middle-class American. However, they still keep in touch with their original countries via the Internet. They can consume the same Chinese-language media content through their laptops as they did before they left their homeland. They even order consumer products from online stores in their countries of origin to satisfy their needs. The author concludes that young Chinese immigrants with professional backgrounds enjoy their bicultural life in the United States. They experience no barriers to acculturation, and they decide to partake of the pleasures of biculturalism.

Some of the young immigrants highly valued this biculturalism. They even believe that being bicultural is better than being purely American or Chinese. With this feature, they can survive anywhere, and they believe themselves to be more open-minded than purely American or Chinese individuals. This thesis terms this feature a globalized characteristic. Most of the interviewees were not opposed to moving to other places if moving would mean better career opportunities. They have great opportunities for social mobility. This is a new situation. Previously, Chinese immigrants with professional backgrounds had to remain in the United

States, so acculturation into American society was their only way to survive. For young immigrants from Taiwan or Hong Kong, staying in America is one choice but not the only choice.

Most of the previous studies on Chinese immigration have indicated that immigrants are passive subjects to be acculturated into the host society. Simply speaking, to survive in the United States, they "have to" acculturate. Even though immigrants with high education levels are able to acculturate in this way, to pursue such acculturation is in fact a decision for middle-class immigrants. However, the young immigrants whom the author interviewed for this thesis are from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Before they came to America, they were westernized in their countries of origin. One of the interviewees even attended boarding school in Europe before he began college in America. Previous exposure to the westernized experience means a certain lack of cultural conflicts and language barriers within American society. These young immigrants are able to acculturate into the host society, but this does not mean that they "have to" do so. In fact, they "actively" choose their life, enjoying its bicultural features. Immigration for them is a part of embracing globalization.

Traditionally, scholars construct a map of global communication and believe that cultural products flow from the center to the periphery. However, in these immigrants' minds, the cultural center is in Asia, not America. Young female immigrants pay much more attention to the entertainment news in Taiwan and Hong Kong than to that in America. Most of them believe that compared to their friends in Asia, they are not fashionable. Here, the role of the Internet is stressed again. The Internet helps these individuals to find out about the latest trends in Asia. The younger immigrants even use the Internet to purchase clothes and accessories from on-line stores in their countries of origin.

The author found that the immigrants interviewed sometime consume cultural products from other countries such as Japan and South Korea. Young immigrants from Taiwan are influenced by Japanese culture. Even though they immigrated to the United States, they still watch Japanese dramas. Similarly, in recent years, Korean dramas have become very popular in Asia. Female immigrants have become the audience for Korean dramas. However, the author has found that the main audience for Korean dramas is older females; the younger audience still prefers Japanese dramas. These young people view Japan as a pop cultural center. In the chapter on observing the young immigrants, the author indicated that the on-line store in Taiwan from which the younger immigrants have purchased clothing is called “Tokyo Clothing” and is now one of the most popular on-line stores in Taiwan. Like Paris or New York, “Tokyo” has connotations of fashion for them.

Immigrants are influenced not only by the host society but also by other immigrant groups. Though this thesis has indicated the intra-group diversity in the Chinese immigrant community, it has also demonstrated the convergence among the sub-groups. For example, young immigrants from Taiwan get along with other Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and learn to speak Cantonese. Similarly, Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong work with immigrants from Taiwan and learn to speak Mandarin. The author has found that because of similar socioeconomic backgrounds, young immigrants from the two places have an easy time creating converging social circles. However, most of the young interviewees are between 25 and 38 years old. They immigrated to the United States in the 1990s, when the socioeconomic situation in China was behind that of Taiwan and Hong Kong. During that time, Chinese immigrants mainly consisted of people from Taiwan and Hong Kong. However, the demographic composition of the Chinese immigrant community has now changed dramatically. The Chinese economy has been

booming for the past two decades. The socioeconomic background of those immigrants from China is similar to that of immigrants from Hong Kong or Taiwan. Young immigrants under 20 or second-generation immigrants can mesh well socially. Based on the data, it would seem that more second-generation Chinese immigrants view themselves as Asian Americans than see themselves as Chinese Americans. The intra-group diversity of the Chinese immigrant community is fading in the second generation.

The author found those young interviewees are more interested in cultural products from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea rather than those from China. According to the assumption of cultural geography, the media market is based on the cultural linguistic groups. Those interviewees selected in this thesis are all well-educated and with middle class backgrounds. Except for the older immigrants, no young immigrants consumed cultural products from China. Most young immigrants have critical attitudes toward media contents from China. They believed TV programs from China were not as attractive as those from other Asian countries, and news from CCTV 4 contains too many political messages. But most of young interviewees are the first generation or 1.5-generation immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong. The author needs more immigrants from China or the second generation immigrants to do furthermore studies over this issue.

Their cultural hybridity includes not only Asian culture but also local culture in Texas. Though most interviewees indicated their experience about the cultural barrier from the host society, they also admitted that they were influenced by the local culture. This localization reflected on their life styles, media use habits, values or even identities. Ironically, they would not be aware of their internalization of local Texas culture until they went back to their original

countries. Most interviewees indicated that after living in Texas several years, they were always viewed as Texans by their friends in their original countries.

RQ 5: What are the different identities associated with the different generations?

Based on the survey and interviews, the thesis has found that first-generation immigrants have high hopes for their children; they hope that their children will be able to preserve their connection to Chinese culture, and they believe that the ability to communicate with parents and grandparents enables children to maintain family ties and learn Chinese values. Most second-generation immigrants have had some experience attending Chinese schools on holidays, but they view learning Chinese as torture. They all rely on English as their main language. On this basis, this thesis concludes that only first-generation immigrants and some 1.5 generation immigrants use Chinese immigrant media. The second-generation immigrants view themselves as Asian Americans. In their eyes, their parents' homeland is a foreign country.

Even though some of the second-generation immigrants can speak Mandarin with their parents, none of them can read or write Chinese. Because of this barrier, they use English media instead of Chinese-language media. Though their parents admitted that their children should be American, they still wished their children to preserve traditional values. In addition to maintaining cultural identity, some parents asked their children to learn Chinese because of China's rise in the world. Their reason for learning Chinese is very practical. They believed that there would be many more opportunities in China in the future. However, most interviewees over 40 years old who were interviewed for this thesis have no U.S. educational background and cannot speak English well. They cannot acculturate into the host society, and they experience conflicts with their children in terms of culture and values.

This thesis found that intra-group diversity is very obvious among first-generation or 1.5-generation Chinese immigrants. Such diversity affects consumer behaviors and media habits. According to Zhou (2009), this diversity is reflected in the development of the Chinese immigrant press. In general, the author agrees with Zhou's notion; immigrants from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan have their own preferences in choosing media content. For example, immigrants from Taiwan are the main readers of *the World Journal*. Though in Houston there are no major newspapers run by immigrants from China, consumers read the free newspaper, the Southern Daily. Immigrants from Hong Kong prefer to watch TV news or read the on-line newspapers from Hong Kong.

Most interviewees agreed that they are Chinese. Only two interviewees stressed that they are Taiwanese instead of Chinese. Two of the interviewees acknowledged that they are Chinese, but they stressed they are Chinese people from Taiwan. Though the majority of the interviewees identify with the Chinese culture, most of the immigrants from Taiwan or Hong Kong usually indicated that they are different from those from China. In questions about media consumption, the difference is obvious. Most young Chinese immigrants from Taiwan or Hong Kong do not consume media content from China. In the observation chapter, the author also indicated that the three different groups have their own social connections. For example, at the weekend parties, most of the attendees were immigrants from Taiwan. Two of the guests were from Hong Kong. However, no one was from China.

Moreover, intra-group diversity is fading among 1.5-generation immigrants. Because of their similar backgrounds, these young immigrants are testing the boundaries among China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. A 1.5-generation immigrant from Hong Kong claimed that most of her best friends are from China. The differences among China, Hong Kong and Taiwan are not

important for her. The identity of second-generation Chinese immigrants is more interesting. Most of these younger individuals cannot read Chinese and only speak a little Chinese. They only view themselves as Asian Americans. Before middle school, they were not conscious of race. After middle school, they started to seek their identities. During this stage, they always grouped themselves with other Asian students and understood the differences between the different races. For the second generation, issues regarding immigrants become issues of race.

Implications

This case study has revealed some new understanding of Chinese immigrant media consumption and the role of their community. First, it has been a myth that middle-class Asian Americana have assimilated into American culture, instead of relying on their enclave community. However, in this case study, the author found those middle-class immigrants still depended on the enclave community in Houston. Their community played a key role for those immigrants' social mobility. Young immigrants with higher education backgrounds can acculturate into American society successfully with the help of the enclave economy. In addition, the enclave economy not only provided the protection but also became an information center for those Chinese immigrants. Zhou (2002) stressed that the development of Chinese immigrant press is based on this form of community.

Second, communication technologies such as the Internet and cable TV are eroding the market share of the Chinese newspapers in Houston. According to this thesis, only interviewees over 40 years old have habits reading "real" newspapers. Every young immigrants who is under 40 use media through the Internet every day. In addition, even though those immigrants over 40 were used to read "real" newspaper, they also tried to use the Internet to read Chinese newspaper

or watch Chinese TV. “Where will the Chinese immigrant press go in the future?” is an interesting research question.

Limits and Future Studies

This exploratory study has two limitations. At first, the sample collected by this thesis was small and not representative of the general population of Chinese immigrants. It included 8 families almost from Taiwan, with the exception of one family from China and the other from Hong Kong. As what this study indicated in the introduction, the sample was virtually a group of highly educated and middle-class Chinese immigrants in Houston. Had the sample been representative and included people of all ages, the results, particularly those about their acculturation level and motivation, might have been different.

Second, most of the observation was carried on the weekend, presumably convenient for the subjects. However, such a time period turned out to record only a concentrated and perhaps skewed part of the subjects’ media consumptions behavior. If the author could live with those subjects and observe how they use media around the clock, a fuller map might have emerged.

This case study reveals the fragmented identity of Chinese immigrants in Houston. This diversity reflected on their media consumption habits. Living in cultural borderlands, they can neither fulfill a full return to the old ways of lifer nor melt into mainstream American culture. Their perception of themselves and their cultures are muddled with paradoxes. According to the data this author collected, those immigrants are separated from the past, but they mystified the experience of return. With the development of new technologies, ethnic media facilitate their imagination of a transnational community. The distinction between “West” and “East” or “here” and “there” is blurring. Though most interviewees all admitted that they were influenced by

American culture, in this study, there was no answer if those Chinese immigrants created a new form of culture. That is a possible direction for the future studies.

Appendix

Participant Family	Age	Birth Place	education	Year in US
1 H	67	China	College	1983
W	61	Taiwan	High School	1983
First Daughter	33	Taiwan	College	1983
Second	31	Taiwan	College	1983
Third	29	Taiwan	College	1983
First Son	16	Texas	High School	
2 W	39	China	Master	1995
Grandfather	over 70	China		
Grandmother	over 70	China		
Son	10	Texas		
3 H	over 60	HK	High school	1998
W	over 60	HK	High school	1998
First daughter	28	HK	College	1998
Second	18	HK	High School	1998
4 H	35	Singapore	MA	1987
W	26	Taiwan	College	2001
5 H	70	Taiwan	College	1975
W	65	Taiwan	College	1975
6 H	63	Taiwan	College	1995
W	57	Taiwan	High School	1995
First Daughter	30	Taiwan	Master	1995

Second Daughter	28	Taiwan	College	1995
7 H	70	Taiwan	College	1984
W	63	Taiwan	high school	1984
Son	37	Taiwan	High School	1984
8 H	68	Taiwan	Master	1978
W	62	Taiwan	College	1978
Daughter	34	US	Master	

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